Juhani Paasivirta

FINLAND AND EUROPE

The early years of independence 1917—1939

Societas Historica Finlandiae
Suomen Historiallinen Seura
Finnish Historical Society

Studia Historica 29

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The early years of independence 1917—1939

edited and translated by Peter Herring

SHS • Helsinki • 1988

Cover design by Rauno Endén

Published in Finnish by Kirjayhtymä, Helsinki, in 1984 under the title *Suomi ja Eurooppa 1914—1939*

ISSN 0081-6493
ISBN 951-8915-14-8

GUMMERUS KIRJAPAINO OY
JYVÄSKYLÄ 1989

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Preface

This study represents an attempt to present a survey of one of the most important periods in recent Finnish history as set against its wider international context. Chronologically, it covers the early decades of independence, the period stretching from the declaration of independence in the latter stages of the First World War to the eve of the Second World War.

In surveying Finnish foreign policy and more generally Finland's international relations over that period, attention has not been restricted solely to political relations, as in more conventionally-orientated studies. Various other aspects of external relations, such as trade, cultural and sporting links are also examined. The parallel study of these component areas of international relations serves to provide a more comprehensive overview of Finland's development over the period in question than would have been possible had a more traditional approach been followed.

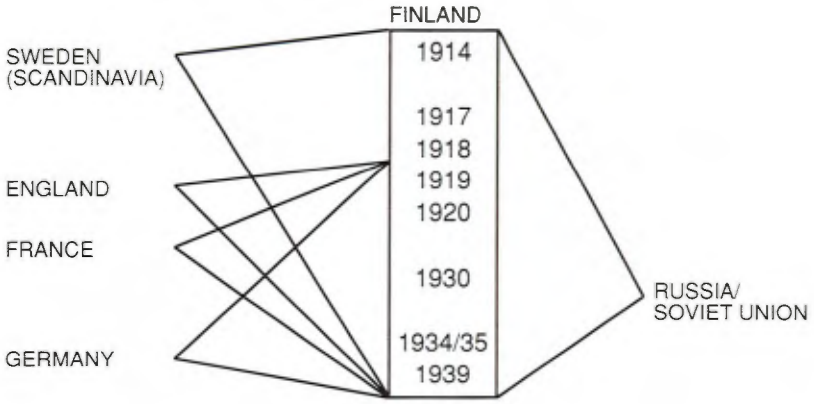
FINLAND'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The author has attempted to identify the background factors shaping the country's international relations as seen from this wider perspective, in terms of both Finland's external and internal development. In the case of the latter, the focus of analysis concentrates on trends in the evolution of political and social opinion as represented by political parties and other interest groups. The press, as a central and highly visible forum for the exchange of views and opinions, naturally features largely here. Coverage has also been given to the institutions functioning in the conventional foreign policy field and in the general area of international relations.

An attempt has also been made to chart how Finland's neighbours and the great powers, primarily Sweden, Britain, France, Germany and Russia/the Soviet Union, looked upon Finland's position during the period under consideration, interpreted the country's policies and internal developments, and how their overall level of interest in Finland as a whole matured.

The author's close contacts with fellow historians at the Department of Political History at the University of Turku played an important part in shaping the work on this study. In this respect, I would particularly like to thank Docents Martti Julkunen, Juhani Mylly and Timo Soikkanen and Dr. Tapani Paavonen, together with Anja Lehikoinen, Mika Hokkinen, Jaakko Mäkelä and Tapani Kunttu. They formed an enthusiastic and inspiring group.

FOREIGN COUNTRIES AND FINLAND



In the final stages of the project, the author was also able to benefit from many discussions with Finnish scholars working in various specialist areas of historical research, something which proved of great assistance given the range of areas embraced. I would like to mention my appreciation to the following: Keijo Korhonen, Professors Sune Jungar and Hannu Soikkanen, Matti Nieminen, Professors Kauko Pirinen, Helge Nyman, Kai Laitinen, Jussi T. Lappalainen and Jorma Ahvenainen, Colonel Vilho Tervasmäki and Sulo Kolkka.

During the course of research trips abroad the author also had the opportunity of exchanging opinions on some of the detailed points covered here with numerous historians and specialists on international relations. I would particularly like to mention Professor Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, René Girault and Dr. Pavel Korzek in France, Professor D.C.Watt, Dr. Anthony Upton and Dr. David Kirby in Britain, Professors Fritz Fischer and Wolfgang J. Mommsen in West Germany, and Professors Nils Andrén and Sten Carlsson, and Alf Johansson in Sweden.

The substantial financial assistance provided by the Wihuri Foundation, together with a three-year research professorship from the Academy of Finland between 1980 and 1983, were of invaluable assistance in seeing the project through to completion.

Finally, I would also like to extend my thanks to my translator, Peter Herring.

Turku, September 1988
Juhani Paasivirta

I The Finnish Grand Duchy in the Shadow of the First World War

1. The nineteenth-century inheritance

As part of the Russian Empire, Finland inevitably came under the shadow of the First World War following the outbreak of hostilities at the beginning of August 1914, but nevertheless escaped direct involvement. Geographically distant from the major theatres of the war and lacking an army of her own, her armed forces having been disbanded at the turn of the century as a result of increased doubts in St. Petersburg about the grand duchy's political loyalty to the Empire, Finland remained on the sidelines. Despite this, August 1914 nevertheless came to be a major turning-point in Finnish history, marking the beginning of a period of significant and far-reaching transition and change.

The nineteenth century had, in many respects, been a period of positive development for Finland. Autonomy had provided the country with new opportunities and a new sense of dynamism. Virtual internal independence, based in its essentials on the constitutional laws and principles of justice inherited from the previous period of Swedish rule and underwritten by the personal guarantees given by Alexander I in 1809, allowed the development of a comprehensive administrative apparatus and judiciary embracing the entire gamut of central and local government. Finland was allowed a very real measure of freedom in the handling of her domestic affairs, a freedom which provided the basis for a whole range of developments in the cultural and

religious fields, the economy, politics and society as a whole; these developments saw Finland increasingly distanced from the rest of the Empire as the century progressed. It was against this background of largely separate development that a recognisably national identity began to take shape and gradually acquire its outwards forms and symbols.

The country's political linkage with autocratic Russia, however, also brought a number of restrictions and brakes on development and, at least during the first half of the nineteenth century, a certain isolation from Western Europe, untypical of the preceding Swedish period. The degree of internal freedom and room for political manoeuvre allowed Finland was ultimately tied to the wider interests of the Empire as a whole and dependent on developments affecting the latter, and thus subject to sometimes unexpected shifts and variations. Finland's pattern of political development was, as a result, not one of stable continuity. Significant change and reform only really proved possible in the transitional periods following major wars and the crises they engendered within the Empire, as demonstrated by the cases of the Crimean and Russo-Japanese Wars, with their many repercussions on internal developments within Russia.

The history of Finland's estate-based Diet provides a case in point. Inherited from the period of Swedish rule and reflecting the traditional division of society into four estates, the Diet remained unchanged in character throughout the nineteenth century and by the beginning of the twentieth century was the last institution of its type in the whole of Europe, with the exception of Russia itself, which lacked any form of diet or parliament. Change when it did come, however, was radical and sudden. The reform of 1906 in the wake of the Russo-Japanese conflict and the 1905 revolution brought an unicameral assembly and universal suffrage and transformed Finnish political representation almost overnight into one of the most superficially progressive in the whole of Europe. Despite this show of reform, however, the general division of power within the country's political system remained unchanged and strongly autocratic. The Russian Tsar, as Grand Duke of Finland, retained his absolute right of veto in approving new laws and the right to dissolve the Diet at will, a fact which ensured that the latter had only a limited ability to control legislation and influence imperial decision-making.

The pace of general economic development in Finland, when compared to that in Western Europe, was relatively slow throughout the century, and that of social development even slower. Industrialisation, initially mainly restricted to the timber industry, had nevertheless begun to make itself felt from the 1870s onwards. This had served to accelerate the general trend of movement away from the traditional economic base towards a modern money economy more dependent on the international market. For all this, Finland remained an essentially agrarian country throughout the nineteenth century. Agricultural developments, characterised by a growing shift away from arable farming to stock raising from the 1860s onwards, created their own problems. Land tenure emerged as an increasingly critical and central social problem in Finnish rural society as non-landowning groups came to make up the majority of the population in large areas of South and West Finland.

Economically and socially speaking, Finland occupied something of an intermediate position. The contrasts between conditions in Finland and those to the West in Scandinavia were significant. Finland's economic base, with its strong agrarian bias and late industrialisation in comparison to Scandinavia, was particularly indicative of her place in the Eastern European continuum. At the same time, the Finnish peasantry, lacking a history of serfdom, had closer links with Scandinavian and West European traditions than with those directly to the East and South.

The development of Finland's system of party politics and its late emergence was also reflective of the role played by the country's linkage with the Russian Empire in insulating Finnish developments from the Western European mainstream. Instead of political activity becoming focused around primarily ideological questions with a pattern of conservative groupings emerging followed by various liberal parties and finally the labour movement, as had been the case in Scandinavia, the language conflict and the resistance which developed after 1899 to Russia's policies aimed at imperial integration provided the impetus for the development of the country's party apparatus. Language provided the basis for the country's first parties, the Finnish and Swedish parties, the former splitting in the course of time into two factions, a split later reinforced in the wake of the reaction to the challenge to Finnish autonomy which developed in the post-1899 period. A

national labour movement and an agrarian party, both modern mass, largely special-interest political groupings, emerged relatively late, at the turn of the century and 1906 respectively.

Finnish society in the nineteenth century was strongly conservative in outlook and marked by a deep division between the educated classes and the peasantry, and one reflected in wide differences in levels of education and learning and social attitudes. Although a growing degree of upward social mobility appeared from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, general social attitudes, however, remained for long unchanged in their traditional mould. Patriarchal and conservative values continued to hold sway long after they had begun to fade elsewhere. The Finnish bourgeoisie never experienced the radical upheavals in political and social ideas which affected society in Western Europe as a result of the revolutions of 1789 and 1848, or the type of development which took place in Sweden, where liberalism emerged as a vital new force in society in the latter part of the century. Little significant movement was made in the direction of social reform for virtually the whole of the nineteenth century. Liberal opinion was restricted to a few small short-lived groupings; no organised liberal party emerged during the autonomous period.[1]

An increasingly important role in Finnish society from mid-century onwards was played by the growing conflict which developed between the Finnish and Swedish-speaking sections of the population. This saw the latter increasingly forced on to the offensive, in defence of its influential position in the country's administrative, cultural and economic life, in the face of the growing strength of the assault waged by its Finnish-speaking counterpart, keen for a greater opportunity for improved access to the upper echelons of power and committed to the creation of a new national culture with its own identifiable independent identity.

Finland's entry into the twentieth century was marked by an increase in the pressures on Finnish social and political development. The policies aimed at greater imperial integration introduced after the February Manifesto of 1899 and lates severely

1. Paasivirta 1975, p. 285.

undermined much of what had been taken to be the established basis of Finnish autonomy. As well as serving to sharpen political tension, they also brought a new mood of pessimism affecting both conservative and socialist opinion. The new policies also played their part in slowing down progress on various social reform questions. Many new laws covering such areas as the reform of local government and working conditions, although approved by the Finnish Diet, failed to receive imperial ratification. Social tensions were also intensified in the post-1905-6 period by the growing conflict which developed between ingrained traditional conservatism on the one hand and the forces of change associated with the electoral democratic process and the rise of organised labour.

Finnish attitudes towards Russia had gone through a number of changes over the course of the years. The earlier, generally positive respect for the autocracy and the sense of loyalty towards the Empire that went with it, which had been particularly strong during the long reign of Alexander II, came under severe stress in the post-1899 period. In their stead came a new hostility initially directed towards the Tsar but which soon expanded to embrace Russia as a whole and the undemocratic system of government it was seen as representing. Ironically, this latter hostility gradually came increasingly close to the view, deeply antipathetic towards Slav culture and infused with a sense of innate cultural and ethnic superiority, which had developed in the latter half of the nineteenth century among the Swedish-speaking upper class and which had previously found little wider acceptance outside it.

Following the move in 1908 by the new Russian assembly, the State Duma, to extend its legislative powers to embrace those Finnish issues considered to relate to questions of general imperial state interest, it became untenable to consider the Tsar and his advisers as the sole threat to Finnish autonomy, as both monarch and assembly appeared to be motivated by similar aims. This development served to confirm an increasing number of non-socialist Finnish politicians in their belief that fundamental and perhaps irreconcilable differences existed between Finnish and Russian political attitudes and ways of thinking. The threat posed by Russia to the continuance of Finnish constitutional traditions came therefore to be increasingly underlined in these circles. Although not slow to condemn the dead hand of Russian

government, those in the labour movement preferred to stress that whatever threat existed emanated solely from the Russian ruling class, and that the politically unrepresented majority in Russia did not constitute any danger to Finnish autonomy.[2]

While a clear sense of cultural independence had become well established by 1914 in Finland, the deep-rooted conservatism typical of Finnish society had, however, seen to it that political ambitions had not really developed beyond the notion of autonomy, even in the minds of the most adventurous political thinkers. Radical nationalism on the European model had remained an insignificant factor in Finland, except among those associated with the likes of Konni Zilliacus in the pre-1905 period.

2. The military and political impact of the outbreak of war on Finland

Rather than taking the form of a single grand opening of hostilities, the outbreak of the First World War in Europe occurred as a series of rapidly successive smaller-scale declarations of war and mobilisations spread over the first few days of August 1914. Austro-Hungary's declaration of war on Serbia was followed by Russian mobilisation and declaration of support for Serbia. The latter in turn was followed by the mobilisation of Austro-Hungary's ally Germany and her declaration of war on Russia and France, which had also begun to mobilise her armed forces. Britain, allied to France, joined the war in the wake of Germany's offensive through neutral Belgium. With most of Europe mobilised and at war, the outline of the two major alliances which were to dominate the conflict had been cast.

The German attempt at a decisive strike at the French heartland through a powerful offensive against Belgium came near to achieving its aim in the early days of the war, but by early September the French were able to mount a counter-attack along the Marne. This forced the advancing German forces to withdraw and before long served to transform the Western Front into a static

2. Ibid., 1978, p. 396—7.

trench warfare-based stalemate. In the East, Russia attempted a pre-emptive strike through Poland on the German forces concentrated in East Prussia and on the Austrians further south in the very first weeks of the war. This brought Russia, however, two major defeats at the hands of the Germans, at Tannenberg between 26 and 31 August and at the Masurian Lakes between 4 and 11 September. She enjoyed better success in her campaign against Austria, where her forces were able to advance relatively easily into East Galicia. Like the Western Front, however, the military situation in the East too soon developed later in 1914 into a virtual stalemate along the entire front stretching from the Baltic to the Rumanian border.

Situated in a sensitive area to the north-west of St. Petersburg, Finland was closely integrated into the mobilisation and defence plans drawn up by the Russian High Command and was therefore quickly affected by Russia's mobilisation when it began to be implemented. Fearing the possibility of a German seaborne attack on southern Finland followed by a thrust towards the Russian capital, it was decided, as part of the Imperial Army's overall deployment plan aimed at securing the general defence of St. Petersburg and guaranteeing the operational potential of the Russian Baltic Fleet based at Kronstadt, to concentrate the majority of forces belonging to the 22 Army Corps in two areas, between Kotka and Viipuri in the north-eastern corner of the Gulf of Finland, and Koivisto and Uusikirkko on the Karelian Isthmus. To act as a forward defence point, a further brigade was stationed along the coast further westwards between Helsinki and Tammisaari.[3] The beginning of a major German offensive in the West against France on 4 August, bringing with it the prospect of a two-front German strategy instead of a single concerted attack eastwards, forced a rapid reassessment of these moves. Units of the 22 Army Corps were redeployed in consequence as early as 21 August to positions in East Prussia where Russia was preparing to mount an attack against Germany. The transfer of these troops was followed by the arrival of new Russian units comprising two

3. Rauanheimo 1950, pp. 153—5.

divisions and a number of smaller units. This same process was repeated in October, when these second-ranking replacements were themselves transferred and replaced by yet weaker units. Subsequent to these various transfers, the strength of Russian forces in Finland, by this stage mainly made up of conscript units, stood at around 35,000 men by the end of 1914.[4]

Finland had been declared by an imperial order issued on 30 July to be at a state of war. Seyn, the Governor-General, followed this with a decree on 1 August temporarily suspending peace-time legislation covering the freedoms of speech, the press, association and public gathering for the duration of the hostilities and subordinating them to his own jurisdiction. With this one move Seyn gave himself what amounted to dictatorial powers. Seyn's new position was one which he could well have hoped for himself when he had earlier advocated the adoption of measures designed to adequately safeguard what he had described as 'the authority of imperial officials and imperial interests in Finland' to the government in St. Petersburg. The reorganisation introduced at the beginning of August, however, also made Seyn responsible to the High Command of the St. Petersburg military district, although no mention of this was made in the official announcement covering the changes which appeared in the Finnish press on 2 August.

The declaration of a state of war, together with the granting of exceptional powers to the Governor-General, quickly made themselves felt during the late summer and early autumn of 1914 when a total of nine Finnish newspapers were banned from appearing.[5] Wartime censorship was introduced and the right to organise public meetings strictly curtailed. These rather heavy-handed moves were designed both to ensure the continuation of peaceful conditions in Finland and in a more cautionary capacity to underline the limits of what the administration was prepared to allow.

The outbreak of war came as a complete surprise to the Finnish population at large and the early days of adjustment to the new situation produced a number of short-lived panic-type reactions

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4. Ibid., 1950, pp. 154—5.
5. Seitkari 1947, pp. 249—50; Kuusanmäki 1980 pp. 86, 89, 104.

linked to the general sense of fear and uncertainty which descended. Rumours quickly multiplied of a German landing on the south coast, and it was feared that Helsinki would soon become a prospective target for enemy bombing. This caused some temporary panic in the capital, with a number of people fleeing the city for the safety of the country. A similar situation, although significantly more chaotic, developed in Viipuri where the town's Russian commandant, mindful of the threat of a German attack, urged the inhabitants to begin voluntary evacuation. Some people in the towns along the Gulf of Finland rushed to sell their properties, fearing their possible imminent destruction. To help counter further unwanted developments of this kind, the Senate ordered the heads of government departments to ensure that all government officials set an example to the rest of the population by remaining at their posts in Helsinki.[6]

The declaration of a state of war was in itself the cause of a certain degree of fear among the general population, creating a widespread sense of unease and leading many to suppose that it might only be a prelude to further Russian moves, exploiting the fact of the hostilities, to deprive Finland of her autonomous freedoms, particularly those related to independent political activity. Uncertainty about the future was further underlined by the increasingly isolated position Finland found herself in with regard to the outside world and information about developments elsewhere in Europe. All news about the progress of the war, not only that concerning the actions of the Russian army on the Eastern Front but also that coming from France, Britain and the capitals of the neutral countries, was subject to strict military censorship before being allowed to be published in the Finnish press.

The initial mood of depression and anxiety affecting the country in the immediate wake of the outbreak of war was relatively quickly replaced, however, in part at least, by a strong wave of loyalty towards the Empire, verging in some of its expressions towards an enthusiastic bellicosity. Some 500 Finns, for example, volunteered for service in the Russian army and military

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6. *Karjala* 4.8.1914; *Työ* 5.8.1914; Väinö Hakanen 22.9.1982; Karhu 1917 p. 14.

academies during the autumn of 1914.[7] Loyalty to Finland's imperial connection had been established and championed by a wide section of political opinion during the previous century. Continuing Russian suspicions, which had been particularly evident in Russian attitudes in the post-1899 period, that Finland felt little essential loyalty to the rest of the Empire, convinced a number of influential Finnish figures of the need to ensure that no doubt was left in St. Petersburg of Finland's solidarity towards the Empire at this time of imperial crisis. It was also felt, particularly among the older generation, following the country's experience during the nineteenth century, that loyalty would also bring tangible benefits to Finland, if not in the short term then at least in the long term.

The cautious wait and see approach with regard to developments between Finland and St. Petersburg adopted among much of political opinion was well reflected in the discussions between various leading Finnish politicians which took place soon after the outbreak of war under the leadership of the Young Finn K. J. Ståhlberg to consider the implications of the new situation. The mood among these figures was generally one of satisfaction that the country had remained relatively stable, and it was generally hoped and expected that calm would continue to prevail. If events were to take a less welcome turn, the press was seen as likely to be able to restore stability.[8] Russia's overall attitude towards Finland remained, however, unclear to many observers of the time, a fact which was seen as casting a somewhat uncertain shadow over the country's future.

The promise of the introduction of a measure of autonomy made to the Russian Polish population on 15 August 1914 had a modest effect in improving Finnish morale. This development was also seen as reflecting a more general change in Russian policy. Rumours of the time even went so far as to suggest that much of the post-1899 legislation which had been introduced to bind Finland more closely to the rest of the Empire, and seen in Finland as contrary to the grand duchy's constitutional laws, would soon be

7. Turpeinen 1980, pp. 262—2.
8. See Onni Hallstén's letter of 6.6.1914 to J. R. Danielson-Kalmari (Danielson-Kalmari collection 2).

repealed, and that the Diet would be recalled to Helsinki in mid-September to discuss the situation facing the country. Rumours such as this reflected the belief that took root in the latter half of August 1914, as evidenced in a wide section of the press, that a change of policy had occurred in the imperial government's attitude towards the Empire's border territories.[9] There were also those who suggested that Russia's alliance with the Western powers might allow, or inspire, some form of diplomatic initiative by Western representatives in St. Petersburg on Finland's behalf.

Helsingin Sanomat and *Hufvudstadsbladet*, together with a number of other non-socialist papers, went to great pains during the course of August 1914 to emphasise that loyalty towards Russia was a general duty of all Finnish citizens. A somewhat more neutral message was conveyed by the socialist press, led by its leading representative *Työmies*, which urged its readers to comply with the military authorities and to avoid all forms of public disturbance, while also warning of the dangers of succumbing to war hysteria.[10] In calling for Finland to take a more active part in the war effort, *Uusi Suometar* went substantially further in its advocacy of loyalty towards the imperial government than the country's other leading papers. Despite this show of solidarity, *Uusi Suometar* also found it necessary to emphasise, however, that as Finland lacked any armed forces of her own, a fact beyond her immediate control, there was no possibility of Finland 'taking direct part in the defence of the country or the Empire'.[11]

Indicative of the sympathies existing towards the latter argument was the Finnish Red Cross' decision at the end of September to dispatch a team of Finnish doctors and nurses to the Eastern Front. A similar team had served in the Far East during the Russo-Japanese War.[12] Moves were also made by other sections of Finnish society to support similar action. The country's industrial

9. Kuusanmäki 1966, pp. 59—60; *Karjala* 16.8.1914; US 17.8., 18.8., 19.8.1914; HS 17.8.1914; TS 18.8., 19.8.1914; Hbl 17.8., 19.8.1914.
10. HS 2.8.1914; Hbl 2.8.1914; *Työmies* 1.8.1914; *Sosialisti* 3.8.1914; *Kansan Lehti* 4.8.1914.
11. US 2.8., 9.8., 5.9.,1914.
12. Rosén 1977, pp. 85—99, 141—2; Suomen Punaisen Ristin hallituksen ptk., 4.8.1914; Faltin 1961, pp. 224—229.

community offered to fund the dispatch of a second Finnish medical crew to the Russian Front. A number of towns in Finland, following the example of the Russian federation of town councils, also decided to sponsor their own medical detachments.[13] In all three of these cases, however, support for the work of the Finnish Red Cross was kept carefully separate from the activities of similar organisations within Russia itself. While wanting to make some show of loyalty towards the Empire at a time of national crisis, every effort was made to act in a way which would emphasise Finland's special and separate status within the Empire. A public fund was set up to collect money for the Red Cross and soon amassed a respectable sum, indicating the generally positive attitude of public opinion towards the imperial war effort during the early months of the war. It is perhaps typical of this general desire to underline solidarity with the rest of the Empire that in its analysis of the conflict between the great powers virtually the entire press was united in blaming Germany for having begun hostilities. Even the Church newspaper *Kotimaa* told its readers that the war was the result of long preparations by the Germans and that a warmonger mentality was deeply entrenched in German society.[14]

All news concerning events in the war appearing in the Finnish press was subject to strict wartime censorship restrictions, as was all editorial comment on the war and the regularly published general surveys of the state of hostilities. Although the Finnish papers were allowed a fair degree of freedom in their resumé coverage of events on the Western front, such as the German advance through Belgium and into France during August and September, the authorities proved decidedly more sensitive about the reporting of events on the Eastern Front involving Russian military action. The major victories won by the Germans over the Russian armies at Tannenberg and around the Masurian Lakes at the end of August and the beginning of September were only passingly referred to in the Finnish press and even then in largely

13. Rosén 1977, pp. 113—115, 141—143; Suomen Punaisen Ristin hallituksen ptk., 8.9.1914; US 19.8.1914.
14. US 2.8.1914; *Työmies* 3.8., 4.9.1914; *Arbetet* 4.9.1914; *Sosialisti* 7.9.1914; *Kotimaa* 5.8., 25.8.1914; *Kansan Tahto* 3.9., 8.9.1914.

non-committal terms. Russian forces, according to early official news reports, were said to have suffered what were described as 'serious setbacks', but these were soon referred to as being only temporary, while much was made of the Russian forces' subsequent return to the offensive. Ensuing reports were worded so as to give the impression that the Germans had failed in their attempts to surround and cut off Russian units, and that the Russian army had finally halted the German advance in East Prussia.[15]

The carefully selected nature and wording of the news stories which were allowed to appear about events on the Eastern front meant that the actual outcome of the battles at Tannenberg and which involved heavy losses for Russian forces, for example, never reached the Finnish public through the domestic press. News of the true course of events only eventually slowly filtered through from Sweden during the course of the autumn.[16] These revelations about what was really happening on the Eastern Front seemed little short of sensational to the cosseted Finnish public and provoked renewed uneasy discussion about the general progress of the war and future prospects.

The actual events of the war during the course of 1914 did not directly affect Finland or Finnish territory. The following two years followed the same pattern, with Finland's direct involvement in the war limited to a couple of separate small incidents. The success of a German naval detachment's bombardment of the military fortifications on the island of Utö off the Finnish southwest coast, the westernmost part of the defensive chain designed to protect St. Petersburg, on 10 August 1915, destroying them completely, was deliberately played down by the Russian forces in their official communiqué on the incident, which merely referred to German forces as having bombarded various lighthouses in the general area of the Åland Islands and as having been successively repulsed.[17] The German airship 'Zeppelin' appeared over the Åland Islands on 25 July 1916, dropping a few bombs on Marie-

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15. US 2.9., 4.9., 17.9., 19.9.1914; HS 2.9.1914; TS 2.9., 3.9., 4.9.1914; Hbl 2.9.1914; Kuusanmäki 1966, p. 76.
16. Lauri Pihkala 27.2.1976; Carl Bergroth 18.5.1978.
17. Hannula 1935, p. 28; US 13.8.1915; HS 13.8.1915; AU 13.8.1915.

hamn. German seaplanes also bombed other islands in the area at around the same time. Russian official sources, while reporting both events, described them in the most general terms as having taken place in the southernmost part of the Turku-Åland archipelago.[18]

The Åland area had begun to receive some attention from Russian military planners from the spring of 1915 onwards, with the stationing of a Russian naval battalion on the Islands in April 1915. In June of the same year it was announced that Russia was withdrawing from the 1856 Paris agreement banning fortifications on the Islands. It did not take long for these moves, together with the German attack on Utö in August, to prompt an upturn in Swedish press interest in the area. It is interesting, and at the same time indicative of an exceptional flexibility on the part of the official censor, that the Finnish press was allowed to report on the Swedish debate which developed around the future of the Islands, despite its obvious political overtones, and, perhaps more importantly, present its own views on the issue.[19] The reason behind this surprising extension of the freedom allowed to the press could well have been that the authorities were only too willing for the rumours which had begun to reach Finland of Swedish plans to annex the Islands to be underlined and for Sweden to appear as a threat, however modest, to Finnish territorial integrity, thereby serving to strengthen Finnish loyalty towards the Empire.

The loyalty shown by Finland towards the Empire typical of the early months of the war had been followed from November 1914 onwards by a period of change and transition in Finnish political attitudes. This change had its roots in a variety of developments, including the imprisonment and deportation to Siberia of P. E. Svinhufvud, one-time speaker of the Finnish Diet, and the publicity surrounding the publication of what was known as the November programme, drawn up by the imperial authorities and aimed at tying Finland much more closely to the control of the central government. This programme was seen as representing a new stage in the Russian campaign to restrict Finland's autonomy

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18. Hannula 1935, p. 32; US 28.7.1916; TS 28.7.1916.
19. Hbl 24.8., 25.8.1915; DPr 24.9.1915.

of action in political and economic affairs. The November programme does not appear to have been prepared by the government in St. Petersburg in direct response to any particular specific problem. Instead, it seems to have been an amalgamation of various earlier demands relating to the need to limit the extent of Finnish administrative freedoms in the cause of imperial stability, which had been voiced by the High Command prior to the beginning of the war, and which, at a time when the influence of the military had decisively increased, were now given the seal of official support.[20]

Wartime conditions meant that the Finnish press was barred by the official censor from freely publishing its views of the November programme and from voicing its criticism of the government. No doubts existed among the country's politicians, however, that the programme's overall aim was unambiguously one of fusing Finland completely with the rest of the Empire, and in the short term of russifying the country. The news that the programme had already been approved by the Tsar, which spread at the time of its announcement, provoked particular anxiety.[21] The bureaucratic inflexibility of the censor in Finland, however, saw to it that while the Finnish press was not allowed to comment directly on the November programme or argue Finland's case against it, it was permitted to report on Russian press response to the issue, even that of the liberal papers. The latter, including such papers as *Rjetsh, Golos Moskvy* and *Russkiya Vedomost*, described the new legislation proposed for Finland, based on an expansion of the 1910 Duma-approved law enshrining the supremacy of imperial interest in the grand duchy and an extension of the embrace of new and existing imperial legislation, as more ambitious than anything Bobrikov had attempted, during his spell as Governor-General between 1898 and 1904.[22]

The events of November 1914 had a direct and powerfully negative impact on public opinion and morale in Finland, serving to strengthen the increasing general sense of pessimism about the future otherwise typical of the time. Nothing was seen as having

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20. Rasila 1966, pp. 41—2; Paasivirta 1978, p. 396.
21. Hultin II 1938, p. 89; HS 18.11.1914.
22. Hbl 19.11.1914; HS 22.11.1914; US 21.11.1914; DPr 21.11.1914; TS 20.11., 22.11., 24.11.1914.

happened since the declaration of a state of war to indicate that the government in St. Petersburg was concerned with improving its relations with Finland. In fact, the thrust of Russian policy seemed directed at quite the opposite, at attempting to subjugate the country more completely and systematically than previously. One result of the growth of this mood of pessimism was the reduction it encouraged in the infighting within Finnish opinion over attitudes towards the country's relationship with St. Petersburg.

The Old Finns, in particular, were dismayed at the seemingly bleak future contained in the November proposals, and the about-turn in their attitudes towards government intentions was all the more forthright as a result than that of other political groupings. 'One can only deplore the fact that ... those voices and forces for whom the sowing of distrust and the creation of conflict between the Empire and Finland has become little less than the sole purpose of life, have neither faded nor weakened,' wrote *Uusi Suometar* at the beginning of 1915 in a review of developments during the previous year.[23] The Old Finns, with a new-found hindsight, gradually began to see their belief in compromise and 'bridge-building' between Finland and Russia, which had formed the basis of the conciliatory style of policies towards St. Petersburg they had for long supported, as having been largely misplaced. For those associated with past policies of passive resistance to Russian policies, the new programme presented much less of a surprise and was rapidly condemned as merely a logical continuation of the position which had been adopted by the imperial government at the turn of the century.

Considering the question of Finland's overall future in 1915, figures such as Emil Schybergson and R. von Willebrand, among the few who publicly debated the issue, thought it unlikely that the immediate future, despite the pressures brought by the war, would see any positive progress or improvement in Finland's position, pointing to the fact that the great political upheavals of 1905 had not produced any significant changes in Finland's favour in the country's degree of autonomy. Similarly, Finland's long-term general development during the nineteenth century had, it was emphasised, been dependent upon a host of unpredictable and

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23. US 1.1.1915.

uncertain factors rather than on single, easily-identifiable events.[24] Strong doubts about the likelihood of Finland's ability to maintain an independent existence were felt within the Swedish People's Party, coupled with a more general fear that the continuance of the war would severely increase the possibility of the eruption of internal social crisis. Swedish-speaking conservatives became increasingly anxious as the war progressed that the country's entire established social system was in danger of destruction. Prompted by these fears, the party made considerable efforts from late 1915 onwards to develop a greater measure of cooperation with the country's other non-socialist parties, particularly the Young Finns.[25]

There were those, however, who came to assume that large-scale changes in Finland's political status might well be inevitable as a consequence of the war. This shaking of established beliefs about the continuity of Finland's political status quo within the Empire was part of the general uncertainty and unease caused by the war, and indicative of the growing level of political dissatisfaction within Finland in some circles. Among the leadership of the Young Finns, Heikki Renvall was only one of those who predicted that the final stages of the war would see the question of Finland's political future reassume focal attention. Social questions, on the other hand, were not thought likely to become a critical issue.[26] Past experience, however, made many wary of expressing any very positive hopes for Finland's future.

Some discussion on the question of the country's future also took place to a limited extent with the labour movement. Finland's socialist leaders had in general taken little part in the debate about the war and its aims which had developed within the international labour movement in both combatant and neutral countries as the war continued. Although Finland had been spared direct involvement in the hostilities, many Finnish socialists considered it inevitable that Finland too, together with the rest of Europe, would be affected by the social disruption that would be left in their wake, simply because of the very geographical and political

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24. Emil Schybergson 1915, p. 142; v. Willebrand 1915, p. 3.
25. Nuorsuomalaisen puolueen keskustoimikunnan ptk., 8.9.1915/NPA 5.
26. Nuorsuomalaisen puolueen liittoneuvoston ptk., 7.5.1916.

extent of the conflict.[27] It was also generally felt by the socialists that the overall role of the labour movement in developments was likely to expand. It would seem correct to assume, however, that, during the first years of the war at least, no one in the Finnish socialist leadership seriously considered a major revolution capable of triggering changes in Eastern Europe as at all probable within the near future in Russia.

Press comment on the question of the country's future, limited as it was by the restrictions imposed by wartime censorship, made much use of analyses and commentaries on developments abroad and international events as a whole to carry indirect references to Finland's own situation and possible fate. The press was not slow to draw attention to Western political figures, for example, when they spoke of the right of self-determination as one of the major aims of the war. It never proved politically wise, however, to draw comparable attention to publicly-expressed war aims when they were presented by Russia's enemies. The press was allowed to report events in the smaller European countries which had managed to remain outside the hostilities with relative freedom. Neutrality was often described in these articles as a viable, if not an ideal policy for small countries. This tendency to underline the positive value of neutrality undoubtedly lay in the hopes felt in various circles regarding Finland's own political position, linked to the general desire to see Finland remain unembroiled in hostilities.

3. Finnish political activity abroad

Traditional political opinions on the question of Finland's status in the Empire of the type espoused by the established political parties began to be paralleled in the period following the first few months of the war, and particularly after November 1914, by a growing interest in an alternative type of political outlook, typified by a rejection of the respect for imperial interest which underpinned much of non-socialist thinking, and an open anti-Russian tone. Despite, or perhaps because of the radicalism of

27. H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 190—3.

these views they were, however, restricted to only a small minority of Finnish society. Many of the ideas behind the activist philosophy had their roots in the opposition which had developed in response to the imperial government's various russification policies introduced in previous years, in particular the opposition and pessimism which had emerged during 1908 and 1909. These latter years had seen quite a substantial deterioration in relations between Finland and St. Petersburg, marked by the gradual reintroduction under Stolypin of many of the disliked imperial government policies, or revised but largely similar versions of them, which had been proposed or introduced at the turn of the century. Resistance to these policies and the expansion of imperial control they brought had been widespread, extending across the majority of non-socialist opinion, and had contributed to a new, although largely temporary, sense of national solidarity.[28]

Against this background and that of the more widely disseminated general conviction derived from experience during the previous century that Finland's best opportunities for introducing internal developments and reforms lay at precisely those times when Russia was most exposed either to internal or external threat, the continuing world war came to be looked upon as a cause for optimism within activist circles rather than pessimism, as it was within much of the rest of Finnish opinion. As Russia's enemy, Germany came increasingly to be seen in terms of the potential she might provide as a lever to either indirectly influence the imperial government or force its hand in its dealings with Finland. The scale of the Russian military defeats at the hands of the Germans at Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes, in as far as accurate information about them filtered through to Finland, only reinforced the attraction of this line of argument and opened up new vistas with regard to the possible final outcome of the war and its effect on Finland's position.

The leading supporters of the activist cause were largely drawn from among the young generation and the small group of Finnish emigrés living in Sweden. The extent to which the political aspirations and view of Finland's future of this latter group, numbering Konni Zilliacus, Jonas Castrén and Herman Gummerus

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28. Paasivirta 1978, pp. 380—2.

among its main members, were rooted in radically different presuppositions from those of the established Finnish parties was reflected in its decision to hold direct talks on the Finnish question with representatives of the German Foreign Ministry at the end of August and beginning of September 1914 in Stockholm and Berlin.[29] Central to the activist case was the conviction that the only action likely to have a perceptible effect on improving the country's position and future development was that undertaken abroad. The movement's ideas found a ready audience among the young educated class then beginning to emerge and the student community at Helsinki University, whose political concepts had been shaped solely during the post-1899 period and whose perception of the imperial relationship was as a result largely negative, to a much greater degree than that of the older generation of politicians dominant in the established parties.

It was from among these groups that the idea of sending Finnish volunteers for military training to Sweden or Germany and acquiring the necessary weapons to arm them, to create a force capable of militarily exploiting Russia's weakened position from within Finland itself, emerged during the latter months of 1914. To be successful, any armed action would require, it was supposed, a combination of favourable factors. Hopes centred around the possibility of Sweden joining the war in alliance with Germany and the latter winning a decisive military victory over Russia, followed by a popular rebellion in Finland. Sweden's resistance to the Finnish overtures made on the question turned attention solely on Germany. P. H. Normén, Kai Donner, Y. O. Ruutu, Väinö Puhakka, Bertil Paulig and Walter Horn acted as the main movers in the movement, the latter two of these travelling to Stockholm at the beginning of December 1914 with a request addressed to the German Legation for military training for 150 Finnish volunteers and shipments of arms. Formal contact with German diplomats in Stockholm over the issue was, however, finally made by Herman Gummerus on 8 December.[30]

Developments within the activist movement in Finland itself were paralleled not only by those within the Finnish emigré

29. Apunen 1968, pp. 64, 73—4, 80—3.
30. Lauerma 1966, pp. 56—7; Apunen 1968, pp. 100—1.

population in Sweden but also by those of the Finnish community sympathetic to the cause living in Berlin. Fritz Wetterhoff emerged as the central figure in the early days of this group, establishing an ad hoc 'Finnish Committee' with a number of his like-minded compatriots. Once started, Wetterhoff quickly made contact with a number of high-ranking officials within the German Foreign Ministry, Ministry of War and Chiefs of Staffs. For all his gifts of persuasion and diplomacy, however, Wetterhoff was to prove something of a liability to the movement in the long run, lacking as he did any real links to Finland proper and prone to pursue his own initiatives without consulting the rest of the movement.[31]

The attitude of the German military and Foreign Ministry towards Finland at the turn of 1915 was one of general rather than emphatic interest, and German statements on Finnish matters betrayed a lack of a clear overall policy. Finland tended to figure in German thinking largely as a potential source of revolt along the Empire's sensitive north-western border, a view owing allegiance to the established German strategic analysis identifying all non-Russian nationalities as inevitable weak spots in Russia's defences. The possibility of Finland's representing just such a gap in Russian defences had been highlighted in the latter part of the nineteenth century by the prominent German military planner General Moltke. A similar view had been adopted by the German High Command in 1909 in the course of its negotiations with Sweden over possible cooperation with Swedish armed forces in the event of a future war.[32] Faced with the unofficial Finnish requests for assistance, the German High Command and Foreign Ministry initially aimed at an answer allowing for a minimum of German commitment. It was decided in Berlin at the end of January 1915 to tell the Finns that Germany would be willing to provide a short period of military training for 200 Finnish volunteers. The brevity of the time allotted for training would allow for little more than instruction for sabotage-type operations against Russian forces stationed in Finland. Similar operations were planned for other

31. Pakaslahti I 1933, pp. 112—25; Enckell 1980, p. 43; Lauerma 1966, p. 177; Apunen 1968, p. 265.
32. Carlgren 1962, p. 12.

areas of the Eastern Front.

Following the early success of the general offensive along the Eastern Front mounted later in the spring of 1915 and which led to the northern flank of the front gradually moving as far north as Riga on the Baltic, Finland came to assume a wholly new significance for German planners. When the German High Command came to review its earlier position on the Finnish volunteer question in the summer of 1915, therefore, it was not surprising that the scale of the revised plans was significantly enlarged. Allocation was now made for training a force of some 1,200 men to be capable of mounting independent military operations or indirectly preparing the ground for a rebellion or national uprising in Finland.

The early groups of specially-recruited volunteers which left secretly for training in Germany were largely composed of upper-class Swedish-speaking students from Helsinki University, but as recruiting got under way the Finnish force came to embrace a much wider range of social backgrounds, including ordinary peasant farmers and industrial workers, although students still retained a prominent place within the movement. By this stage the overwhelming majority of volunteers were also Finnish-speaking, drawn largely from southern Ostrobothnia and southern Karelia.[33] The impact of this completely new departure in Finnish political developments was initially restricted by the limited numbers of volunteers, recruiting officers and others involved, who only totalled some 2,000 to 2,500 men in all. The secrecy surrounding the movement also meant that the rest of Finnish society only became aware of its existence over a period of time and then only through fragmentary reports. The number of those who expressed various degrees of sympathy with the volunteers as news of the operation spread far outweighed the number of those actually involved. The development of widespread popular opinion favourable towards the volunteers was also latterly significantly influenced by the general course of political events and the changes which took place in Finland's overall situation.

Stockholm became the centre of the diplomatic efforts of the volunteer movement following Wetterhoff's fall from grace in the

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33. E. Hornborg 1956, p. 410; Lauerma 1966, p. 108; Enckell 1980, pp. 62, 147—48.

autumn of 1916.[34] The movement's main effort nevertheless continued to be focused on maintaining and developing relations with Germany, although hopes remained high of the possibility of Sweden entering the war. As the capital of a neutral country, Stockholm offered the activists welcome room for manoeuvre in comparison to conditions in Finland and the possibility of maintaining a wide network of international contacts, as well as the opportunity to freely publicise their cause. The real beginnings of the diplomatic bridgehead established in Stockholm lay in the work of a three-man committee led by Herman Gummerus formed in July 1915 which, enjoying good links with the Swedish press and various political groups, quickly assumed the role of chief coordinator of the movement's information-gathering and publicity efforts. New members were added in January 1916 and the title of the 'Stockholm delegation' was adopted under the leadership of Adolf von Bonsdorff. In its new form, the Stockholm delegation served as a discussion forum collating information on international developments and events on the Eastern Front, and debating the various options open to advancing the cause of the volunteer movement. As a committee of equals, however, the level of practical cooperation existing within this body was sometimes less than ideal, a fact not helped by the freedom allowed to members to continue to work through their personal contacts. The unofficial diplomacy undertaken by the volunteer movement abroad was never based on any authority granted to it by the Finnish people as a whole and solely represented an extension of the activities of the small activist groups operating within Finland. The movement's underground and unofficial status was, in fact, a major handicap for it in its dealings with Germany.[35]

The continuance of the war also provoked another departure from the traditional Finnish policy of loyalty towards the Empire in the shape of moves to reorientate public opinion in favour of the Western powers, primarily Britain and the United States. Various attempts were made to gain some form of support from this quarter

34. For the background to Wetterhoff's fall from grace, see Enckell 1980, pp. 171—79; Lauerma 1966, pp. 465—67; Mustelin 1974, p. 37.
35. Paasivirta 1968, pp. 31—2.

for Finland in her problematic relationship with the imperial government in St. Petersburg. This attempt to gain Western support proved short-lived, however, and failed to achieve any semblance of permanent form comparable to the more organised activities of the volunteer movement. Interest in the possibility of Western assistance remained restricted to a handful of individuals, and then only for a relatively short period of time during the early years of the war, and failed to develop any wider significance.

This group of Western-aligned figures drew their practical inspiration from the Western reaction to developments in Finland which had emerged at the beginning of the century. Indeed, it had been the countries of Western Europe which had been most forthcoming in their support for the Finnish cause following the increased pressure of russification after 1899. It was primarily this which encouraged the hopes felt in some quarters following the outbreak of the war that the Western powers, and in particular Britain, would be willing to exert their influence as allies on Russia to re-recognise Finnish autonomy. This largely diplomatic support would, it was hoped, be deployed during the actual course of the war but most particularly during the peace negotiations that would follow.[36] The increasing emphasis put on liberalism and democracy and, above all, on the idea of national self-determination, by the Western powers as the war progressed only served to further encourage the hopes of Finnish anglophiles. Finland's long struggle in defence of her constitutional freedoms was thought to have engendered a respect in the West for Finland as a country which had shown that it possessed a developed sense of national identity, a will to survive, and a respect for Western principles of justice.

Kaarlo Ignatius, who travelled to Britain in November 1914 and J. N. Reuter and Lorenzo Kihlman, the former with a long record of promoting the Finnish cause in Britain and America, who travelled to Western Europe and the United States in January 1915 to discuss securing Finland's autonomous position through a system of international guarantees, were typical of those Finns who trusted to the potential influence of the West in Finnish

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36. Paasivirta 1949A, p. 425.

affairs. Their efforts were supplemented by those of various expatriate Finns resident in London and other Western capitals able and willing to use their personal connections and influence to help further the Finnish cause.[37]

4. Finland's position during the early years of the war as seen from abroad

The possibilities of Russia's total collapse and defeat, or her sueing for a separate, negotiated peace were among the potential conclusions to the war considered by the German High Command and Foreign Ministry when planning the overall outline of German strategy for operations on the Eastern Front. Because of the very wide range of possible developments in the East that had to be taken into account, it was only natural that the German leadership, despite its modest interest in Finland, consistently fought shy of aligning Germany too closely with the Finnish volunteer battalion during its period of training at Lockstedt near Hamburg, or with the Finnish cause in general. Finland's main significance in German eyes lay in her proximity to Sweden. The possible use of Finland, or rather of the prospect of future changes in Finland's political status and the latters' potential impact on Sweden's international position, as a bait to persuade Sweden to enter the war on the German side, exercised the minds of German military strategists for some time. Far from breaking new ground, this idea closely paralleled the persuasive diplomacy used by the Western powers during the Crimean War.

The onset of hostilities in Europe had seen Sweden faced with a number of difficulties relating to her ability to maintain her neutrality and territorial inviolability. It was only logical therefore, against this background of more pressing concerns, that Finland came to be seen in Swedish eyes as only marginally distinguished from the greater mass of the Russian imperial whole during the late summer and early autumn of 1914. The rumours circulating at the time about a possible German landing on the Finnish southern

37. Holsti 1940, p. 117.

coast were reported in the Swedish press, but interest was short-lived.[38] The knowledge that Russian mobilisation had not at this stage been extended to include the Åland Islands appears to have calmed popular anxieties in Sweden in the early weeks of the war and to have dampened debate about Finland as a whole.

From mid-November 1914 onwards, however, after news began to filter through of Svinhufvud's imprisonment and deportation to Siberia and of the announcement of the November programme, the Swedish press embarked on an extensive debate of the Finnish question, its first of the war, some of it highlighting the threat posed to Sweden by the Russian moves in Finland.[39] The debate assumed somewhat larger proportions when a number of conservative papers such as *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* and *Svenska Dagbladet* attempted to use the example of Russian oppressive policies in Finland as a weapon in their attacks against the liberals and social democrats in Sweden, who liked to emphasise the Entente powers' commitment to fighting for freedom and democracy.[40] Finland was not treated as a self-contained entity by the press in Sweden at this stage, but very much from the point of view of her possible fate in the context of the overall conflict within Europe.

During the spring and summer of 1915, Finland's position and likely future became the subject of extensive discussion in the Swedish press. The spread of information about the clandestine activities of the volunteer movement partly explains this, but the success of the German offensive on the Eastern Front and the emergence of activist opinion in Sweden itself in the debate which developed around the country's foreign policy proved the more important catalysts in this increased interest in Finland. It was at this stage that the German Foreign Ministry attempted to persuade Sweden to reassess her neutral foreign policy and enter the war in alliance with Germany. In support of the German case, it was hinted that if events were to prove favourable it might be possible to transfer the Åland Islands to Sweden and Finland give her independence.[41] Parallel to these German moves, Sweden's own

38. Eskola 1965, p. 70; DN 3.8., 4.8., 8.8.1914; StD 9.8., 11.8.1914.
39. Eskola 1965, p. 101.
40. Ibid., pp. 71—5.
41. Carlgren 1972, pp. 102—5, 117—121, 124—8.

small band of activists also worked towards persuading their government to bring Sweden into the war allied to Germany. Sharing a number of common political ideas, the Finnish and Swedish activists in Stockholm had found themselves able to work to an extent hand in hand. The Finnish activists had been notably successful in getting a significant amount of coverage of their cause in Swedish newspapers and magazines, a fact which had also indirectly reinforced the activist input to the debate on Sweden's foreign policy.[42] This campaign of persuasion pursued by the Swedish activists was not unfavourably viewed by *Aftonbladet* and *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, two of Sweden's most important newspapers, but the great majority of the press remained firm in its opposition to any change in the country's foreign policy.[43] The German attempts at persuasion were all rejected by the Swedish government. In underlining Sweden's intention to maintain her policy of neutrality, both the Prime Minister, Hjalmar Hammarskjöld, and the Foreign Minister, Knut Wallenberg, also avoided making any public statements concerning Finland's position.

Despite the decline in activist opinion in Sweden which set in from the autumn of 1915 onwards, the seeds of a continuing interest in Swedish political debate in Finland's fate and possible future developments in the East had nevertheless been sown. The interest of the Swedish press in Finnish affairs became focused on the possibilities of either a restoration of Finnish autonomy or the acquisition of independence. It was generally thought that progress on either issue would be slow in forthcoming, if at all, particularly in the case of the latter. In the event that Finland did become independent, her chances of staying so were generally rated low.

The possibility of Finland's future independence was virtually ignored by the socialist and liberal press, probably because of their distaste for any solution which would require German military involvement. It was also assumed that any political development of this kind in the Baltic area involving some degree of great power intervention would also have a negative impact on Sweden's own international position. The attitude of the Swedish Right, on the

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42. Eskola 1965, p. 23.
43. Pakalahti II 1934, pp. 46—54; Eskola 1965, pp. 133—6; Apunen 1968, p. 265.

other hand, towards the possibility of Finland's becoming independent with German assistance was far from being so pessimistic, as such an outcome was seen as likely to be only beneficial to Sweden's security in the East. Conservative opinion also proved somewhat more sanguine about the possibility of Finland's being able to maintain her independence, if she achieved it.

As the idea that Russia was going through a period of important change gained ground, it brought new impetus to the debate surrounding Finland in the Swedish press. The Social Democrats and the Liberals, in particular, laid great store by this interpretation of events, believing that it heralded a new and more advantageous development on the road to strengthening Finland's future position. The autumn meeting of the Russian Duma in 1915 and the apparent strength of the opposition parties which it witnessed only reinforced these and similar views. The Swedish Right, in contrast, remained unconvinced that any changes in the Russian political system would bring significant improvement in Finland's position.[44]

The sharpness of the differences of opinion over foreign policy in Sweden was such that the members of the Finnish volunteer movement active in Sweden were largely shunned by all the major political parties except those on the Right. Erik Palmstierna, writing in his party's paper *Social-Demokraten* in the autumn of 1916, underlined his belief, shared by many in the more liberal parties, that Finnish activism relied entirely on German support and that it had allied itself with a power which was unlikely to have much say in any negotiations that might take place at the end of the war, and one which would have little or no influence to wield in support of Finnish independence. Similar criticism of the Finnish movement also featured in the pages of *Dagens Nyheter* at around the same time.[45]

With the overall weakening of Germany's military position which took place during the summer of 1916, the level of interest in the Finnish question among the German leadership also declined. The statement made to the leaders of the Finnish

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44. Eskola 1965, pp. 111—14, 127—30, 141—3.
45. Ibid., pp. 148, 172—7.

volunteer movement by the usually reserved German Foreign Ministry on 24 October, formally limiting future German assistance to no more than a promise of help in the restoration of Finnish autonomy, was symptomatic of this change. The possibility of Germany sueing for a separate peace with Russia was then very much in the minds of German leaders.[46] The German military command nevertheless did not underestimate the potential advantage to be gained, if the war was to continue, if Russia's north-western border, in the shape of Finland, was to become unstable, thereby tying up a sizeable quantity of Russian forces. These developments in German thinking presented the Finnish activists with a difficult and somewhat unexpected problem, namely that of what would happen to the Finnish volunteer battalion if, at the conclusion of the war, Finland continued to remain part of the Russian Empire. While it is true that the Finns were informed by the German Army on 18 December 1916 of the German intention not to disband the unit, thereby eliminating some of the Finnish anxieties, a major question mark over what the future would bring for the movement remained.

British concern about the restrictions imposed on Finnish autonomy and the general curbing of political freedoms in the grand duchy introduced by the Russian authorities had been cautiously expressed to the Russian Foreign Ministry at the end of 1914 and again towards the end of the summer the next year by the British Ambassador in St. Petersburg.[47] Whether these comments had any real influence on Russian thinking is difficult to say. At most, they might perhaps have acted as a slight brake on any new policies envisaged by the imperial authorities likely to clash with Finland's autonomous position, but otherwise their effect was minimal. The Foreign Office's anxieties as communicated to St. Petersburg were not, however, born simply out of respect for Finland's independent national development, but owed their origin to what were seen as the wider implications of Russian action in Finland. Russia's oppressive policies in Finland were seen as being instrumental in generating and inflaming anti-Russian sentiment in Sweden, which, if left unchecked, could, it

46. Pakaslahti II 1934, pp. 223—5, 243—6.
47. Lyytinen 1980, pp. 62—5.

was feared, push Sweden into abandoning her traditional policy of neutrality in favour of an alliance with Germany.

Britain's interest in developments in Finland can be seen therefore as dictated by general strategic considerations. Finland had assumed a completely new significance in the international situation created by the war as a link between the Western powers and Russia. This only grew after the Bosphorous was closed to Entente shipping and subsequent attempts to reopen the channel failed, as witnessed by the debacle at Gallipoli. Britain's strategic interest lay in ensuring the maintenance of Finnish stability and preventing dangerously close ties developing between Finland and Germany.

France showed a distinctly low level of interest in Finland during the early years of the war and in the few cases this did change the cause ultimately usually lay elsewhere than within Finland itself. French fears of German expansionist intentions in the northern Baltic appeared to be confirmed when it became known that Finnish volunteers were receiving training in Germany. Rumours circulating about the possible fate of the Åland Islands provoked similar suspicions in Paris.

5. The impact of the war on the Finnish economy

Finland had by 1914 established a substantial network of international trading relations and these naturally suffered serious upheaval and dislocation following the outbreak of the war. Trading links between Finland and Germany and her allies fell away sharply during the very first days of the war. This was soon followed by increased difficulty in maintaining trading ties with Britain, the rest of Western Europe and the Americas.

The maintenance of trading links with Sweden was of central importance to Finnish business in the difficult supply conditions imposed by the war. General uncertainty in the Baltic, reaching as far north as the lower reaches of the Gulf of Bothnia, saw traffic move northwards to run between Rauma or Pori on the Finnish side and Gävle in Sweden, or transferred to rail via Tornio and Haaparanta. Sweden was also used as a bridgehead by Finnish business to maintain links with countries further west. Butter

exports to Britain, for example, were channelled through Sweden and Norway for a short time until the spring of 1915, while London and Scandinavian harbours were used to import coffee from South America.[48] A rail link between Tornio and Karungi in Sweden on the Finnish-Swedish border, funded by the Russian government, was built during the autumn of 1914 to link the Swedish and Russian rail networks, enabling trade between Russia and Britain to be carried on the Finnish rail system. Transit traffic through Sweden became less reliable from 1915 onwards, however, following German pressure on the Swedish government to halt the service, which forced the Russian authorities to experiment with new routes to the West running via Rovaniemi and Kirkenes and Archangel.[49]

A long period of readjustment in the Finnish economy set in after August 1914. The virtual total break in trading links with the West proved a very real blow for Finnish exporters. The severance of these established ties was felt almost immediately in the timber and paper industries, most especially by companies exporting sawn timber and slightly less so by those exporting paper, pulp and carton products. Butter exports to the West were also seriously curtailed. Imports of raw materials and finished goods from Western countries were similarly affected, while cotton imports had to be re-routed, with variable success, through Sweden.[50] Once the scale of these economic difficulties became clear, the fear that they would have catastrophic domestic consequences rapidly spread. Rampant unemployment would result, it was predicted, possibly even leading to the whole industrial workforce being thrown out of work within three months. With the prospect of such a development ahead, *Hufvudstadsbladet* counselled the need for all forms of class rivalry to be put aside in the cause of industrial and political peace.[51] The possibility of a repetition of a national disaster comparable to that of the famine years of 1867-8 also loomed large for some observers. *Uusi Suometar* reflected a general fear when it argued that a worsening of the economic situation was inevitable and that possibly large-scale industrial

48. Hbl 15.8.1914; DPr 13.8.1914; HS 16.8.1914; Rolf Berner 2.12.1976.
49. Pihkala 1980, p. 39; Hoving I 1947, p. 221.
50. Karhu 1917, pp. 73—9.
51. Hbl 8.8.1914; HS 19.8.1914; US 15.9., 23.9.1914: DPr 12.8.1914.

and social unrest would follow.[52] A number of industrial plants did in fact cease production completely during August 1914, including the Gutzeit and Halla sawmills and timber-processing plants in Kotka and two major textile and tobacco factories in Turku. Statistics for September showed some 20,000 unemployed, amounting to about a fifth of the total industrial labour force. Many factories were also forced to introduce shorter working weeks.[53]

As the autumn of 1914 wore on, however, it became increasingly apparent that the country was adjusting to the changed economic situation significantly better than had been feared by the more pessimistic observers in the early weeks of the war. An important factor making for relative calm and optimism lay in the country's high stocks of bread grains and cereals. Acting against the express wish of the Finnish Diet, the imperial government had decided back in July 1914 not long before the outbreak of war to impose an import duty on all grain imported into Finland from elsewhere than Russia itself. Fear of this move had served prior to its announcement to accelerate the import of grain, mainly from Germany.[54]

The severance of Finland's economic links with Central and Western Europe caused by the war served to transform Finnish-Russian trade relations, and it did not take long for the Finnish economy under this pressure to become closely tied to the Russian war economy. In itself, this phenomenon was not surprising as a similar development had taken place during the Russian-Turkish War of 1877—8 and, more recently and more extensively, during the Russo—Japanese War of 1904—5.[55] The impact of the First World War on the Finnish economy, however, was to prove of unprecedented proportions. Its very scale fuelled a boom in trade with the rest of the Empire. As time went on Finland became increasingly more closely tied to Russia in economic terms than at any time since 1809. The significant degree of economic

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52. US 22.8.1914. See also K. N. Rantakari's letter of 5.8.1914 to Danielson-Kalmari (Danielson-Kalmari collection 5).
53. Suomen virallinen tilasto XVIII A/13 1914, pp. 116—17; Karhu 1917, pp. 74, 331; HS 8.1.1915.
54. Hbl 12.6., 16.6., 18.6., 16.7.1914.
55. Paasivirta 1978, pp. 290, 355.

independence which had been achieved from the mid-nineteenth century onwards was rapidly lost in the decisive early years of the war. This shift in economic ties in Russia's favour also brought an increasing degree of political sympathy with Russia within the Finnish business community.

From late autumn 1914 onwards, large imperial government orders began to flow in to the Finnish metallurgical, rubber, leather and textile industries, gaining real momentum from the spring of 1915. Some two-thirds of these orders were placed with heavy industry. Over 400 Russian ships were repaired and overhauled at the Hietalahti shipyard in Helsinki between 1914 and 1917, while the Crichton, Wulcan and Rautateollisuus companies in Turku consistently enjoyed extensive order-books throughout the war for ships and military equipment. Textile companies also began receiving large Russian Army orders from 1915, which for companies like Turun Verkatehdas in Turku presaged significantly increased output and correspondingly increased profits.[56] The overall effect of war-related orders on the Finnish economy can be seen in the virtual doubling of the gross value of industrial output which took place between 1913 and 1916. The number of workers employed in heavy industry rose by some 55% over the same period, and of those in the rubber and leather industries by nearly 16%, and in the textile industry by nearly 18%.[57]

The timber industry, in contrast, found itself faced with a number of problems. Saw mills proved particularly vulnerable to wartime conditions as it was difficult to find new markets for the sawn goods previously exported to Western Europe. Many of the leading companies like Gutzeit nevertheless strove to keep their plants in operation, at the expense if necessary of swelling their stocks. The conviction that the war would not last long and that Western markets would soon be reopened to Finnish exports was initially widespread among the business community. As hopes of a speedy conclusion to hostilities faded, however, overstocking became a very real problem and many companies were forced to run down their operations.[58] Reductions in felling, hauling and

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56. Pihkala 1980, p. 36; Jutikkala I 1957, pp. 148—9; Gripenberg 1932, pp. 132—9; 143; Nikula 1950, p. 72.
57. Hjerppe-Siltari 1976, pp. 122—3, 130.

floating work were automatic, thereby further reducing the employment opportunities of the already swelling rural landless population. The strained wartime conditions in Europe put the Finnish timber industry in a difficult predicament and one which eventually led to the laying-off of a significant number of those employed in the industry.

The war years brought a radically different set of opportunities for the Finnish paper industry than for its timber-producing counterpart. Demand for Finnish paper in Russia rose dramatically. Companies like Kymi were able to sell as much paper and paper products on the Russian market as their production capacity allowed. With the general rise in prices which took place profits also increased, giving the larger Finnish companies substantial opportunities for reinvestment in new plant and machinery.[59]

The rapid growth in Russian imports from Finland caused by the war came to dominate the whole structure of the Finnish economy. Industry in southern Finland in particular developed close ties with the Russian economy, although the situation in northern Finland remained largely unchanged, with the area retaining its traditional agrarian base. The economic collapse widely feared as inevitable in August 1914 never materialised. The Russian share of Finnish exports rose from 28% in 1913 to 77.6% in 1915, while Russian imports into Finland rose from 28.3% to 66.6% over the same period.[60] Finnish industry was able to reap sizeable profits from the increase in trade with Russia during the early war years, despite the problems caused by the different demands of the Russian wartime market from those of the pre-war Western one. A rapid redistribution of income and resources took place within Finland's industrial infrastructure to accommodate these changes. Some sections of the economy were unable to avoid the stigma of being branded as profiteering from the war. Despite these readjustments, the overall profile of Finnish industry remained relatively stable over the war years. Machinery was modernised, factories extended and new production processes introduced across the whole spread of industry, to such an extent that

58. Hoving I 1961, p. 157; Ahvenainen 1972, p. 59.
59. Ahvenainen 1972, p. 62.
60. Bobovich-Bovykin 1983, pp. 167—8.

shortages of skilled labour were experienced in certain areas.

In as far as any thought was given to the future of Finland's trading relations in the postwar period during the early years of the war, Finnish industrialists tended to assume that Finnish industry would be able to retain a better level of access to the Russian market than that enjoyed before 1914. Germany, it was presumed, would permanently lose her economic influence in Eastern Europe and Russia. A clear defeat for Russia or victory for Germany were both ruled out as unlikely by the business community. Trading relations with Britain would remain important, it was thought, while those with Germany would decline. Predictions in the press also highlighted the fact that Sweden and Norway would probably be in a better position to benefit on the post-war Western timber market than Finland because of the latter's wartime isolation. The demands of the post-war European market would, it was generally conceded, require a general overhaul of Finnish trading relations, including the setting-up of a special Finnish chamber of commerce in St. Petersburg and the development of a centralised network of commercial representatives covering Western Europe.[61]

The influence of three further factors, the beginning of large-scale military fortification work, the lack of guaranteed food supplies, and currency uncertainties also contributed to the strain on the Finnish economy and Finnish society imposed by the continuation of hostilities in Europe.

Extensive fortification work was begun in Finland at the beginning of 1915 in accordance with defence plans drawn up by the military command in charge of the St. Petersburg military district. Work was started along the south coast and on the most outlying islands of the Turku archipelago and in the interior of the country, where staggered defence zones complete with permanent field equipment were created. As the war developed, however, the emphasis of Russian defence plans for Finland gradually shifted. The earlier focus on repulsing a seaborne attack mounted across the Gulf of Finland was supplemented by a new-found concern for the in-depth defence of the Finnish hinterland. Defence interest also became centred around the possibility of an enemy force, either a Swedish or a joint Swedish-German force, mounting an

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61. *Kauppalehti* 16.9., 9.12.1914, 30.5.1915.

attack across the Gulf of Bothnia. Fortification preparations were extended to the Åland Islands in 1915.[62] The scale of the fortification programme put in hand, with its large manpower requirements, had a powerful impact on overall levels of employment and soon made it a significant factor within the Finnish economy and society as a whole. The number of men involved on projects in the plan rose at times to as many as 30,000. On-site supervision and discipline were uniformly ill-organised, making for often unsatisfactory working conditions and contributing to a small but appreciable rise in social instability and discontent.[63]

The food supply situation in Finland remained satisfactory throughout the autumn of 1914, without any shortages of cereals developing. While grain imports from the West, mainly Germany and the United States, had already ceased by this point, imports from the rest of the Empire continued relatively unhindered, except for some problems encountered ensuring adequate transport for contracted shipments. Taking advantage of this, the State Food Committee, set up to ensure continuity of supplies, embarked on a programme of buying and stockpiling Russian cereals. The overall food situation was also helped by the fact that Finland's own harvests in 1915 and 1916 were both good. The government and the Committee both proved unprepared, however, for the war and wartime conditions lasting as long as they in fact did.[64]

The exceptional conditions brought by the war caused food prices to gradually rise, particularly from the autumn of 1916 onwards, although this was countered to some extent by the rise that took place in industrial wages over the period. The first years of the war saw increased profits for the more prosperous of the farming community able to sell a proportion of what they produced, although smaller, self-sufficient farmers were unable to benefit. As time went on the wages of the industrial workforce also increasingly failed to keep pace with rising prices. The overall difference between the state of industry in terms of pay and conditions and of the economy as a whole in 1915 and 1916 from

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62. Rauanheimo 1950, pp. 155—64.
63. Kirby 1979, pp. 38—9.
64. Karhu 1917, pp. 149—69; Kirby 1979, p. 46.

that of the pre-war years nevertheless remained relatively small, particularly when compared to what happened to the economies of those countries actively engaged in the war.

Despite the pressures on the money market and the imperial economy caused by the war, Finland was able to avoid being forced to abandon her own currency and move back to the rouble. For a country beset by setbacks in a variety of other areas, this represented an important symbolic achievement. The actual business of maintaining the Finnish mark's value in wartime conditions, however, proved a difficult task for the Bank of Finland. This was partly due to the flood of Russian roubles which entered the country as a result of the costs incurred by the upkeep of Russian military forces in Finland, the large orders placed with Finnish industry by the imperial government, and the high cost of the fortifications programme. Finland soon acquired a large rouble surplus, coupled with inadequate reserves of other foreign currencies, as a result.[65]

Although the exchange rate of the rouble abroad steadily fell from 1914 onwards, no similar decline took place in Finland, where the Russian authorities were unwilling to tolerate such a development, both for reasons of simple political prestige and because of their desire to avoid any increase in real terms in their expenditure in Finland. With the fall in the value of the rouble and the Finnish authorities forced to go on quoting unrealistically high exchange rates, the international value of the Finnish mark also inevitably fell. This, in turn, saw the value of the currency of Finland's only real wartime international trading partner, Sweden, rise against the mark. Beginning in the summer of 1915, the Bank of Finland decided, despite Russian opposition, to begin allowing the Finnish rouble exchange rate to fall. This move was forced on the Bank by the increasingly large losses it had suffered in converting its rouble holdings which had grown as the rouble's real value abroad fell, coupled with the increase in Finnish-Russian trade and the development of currency speculation. To counter this continually growing currency problem and to calm inflationary pressure, the Bank of Finland and a number of Finnish

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65. Meinander 1963, pp. 58—61.

commercial banks also began negotiating mark-denominated loans with Russia from early 1916.[66] Overall, the rouble problem proved a sensitive issue for Finnish bankers. For all its relative independence, the Bank of Finland was in no position to forget the possible political consequences of its actions and was forced to show the upmost caution in all its financial dealings with the Russian authorities.

6. Finland's cultural and sporting links abroad

Finland's increasing isolation from the West during the war, brought by the disruption and severance of the country's traditional links abroad and deepened by internal social developments and the growth of official restrictive measures, also made itself felt in the international activities of Finnish writers, artists and athletes. This sense of isolation was felt all the more keenly since Finland had for long enjoyed untroubled contact with developments abroad in these fields.

The war saw the country's traditional and important academic links with universities in Germany totally eliminated. Academic contacts with Sweden and the rest of Scandinavia were also reduced to a minimum as it became increasingly difficult to obtain passports to travel abroad. This was in large part due to the suspicions of the authorities that travelling academics, particularly those intending to visit Sweden, might be sympathetic towards separatist activities or perhaps directly associated with the volunteer movement.[67] Similar travel restrictions were encountered by writers and artists, who fared little better in their attempts to maintain their pre-war links abroad.

Literary and artistic magazines, such as *Aika* and *Valvoja*, nevertheless continued to try and cover foreign developments as best they could through their articles and reviews, although these inevitably often proved cursory. Swedish-language publications, such as *Finsk Tidskrift* and *Nya Argus*, often achieved a slightly wider coverage of foreign and especially Scandinavian issues.

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66. Pihkala 1980, pp. 32—3.
67. H. Söderhjelm 1960, pp. 179—82.

Publishers' contacts abroad were also affected, a fact reflected in an overall gradual reduction in the number of translations of foreign fiction appearing on the Finnish market. The prospects for selling the translation rights of Finnish fiction also fell off as part of the same development.[68]

The isolation brought by the war also affected Finnish sportsmen who, with the memory of their successes at the Baltic Games held in July 1914 in Malmö in Sweden and at the Stockholm Olympics still fresh in their minds, found themselves unable to travel to what international meetings were still being held and, as the war continued, not even to Scandinavian ones. A small Finnish contingent took part in the winter sports competitions held in the Scandinavian countries in the early months of 1915, including the skating championship between teams from Oslo, Helsinki and Stockholm held in the Swedish capital. By 1916, however, even Scandinavian meetings became closed to Finnish athletes, with the Finnish team chosen for the Holmenkollen Ski Championships, for example, being forced by the authorities to withdraw in the early spring of 1916. This was largely the result of a government order, designed to contain the activities of the volunteer movement, banning the issuing of passports to all men between the ages of 19 and 35, and which succeeded in almost completely preventing the participation of top-ranking Finnish sportsmen in Scandinavian competitions.[69] Following this, the only foreign competitors to take part in Finland's own 'international' competitions came from the rest of the Russian Empire. A number of Estonian athletes took part in various wrestling and track and field competitions held in 1916, and some Russian competitors in skating championships held the same year, while Finnish skaters travelled to meetings in St. Petersburg.[70]

The war also put a question mark over the summer Olympics to be held in Berlin in 1916. Even were the Games to be held, Finnish sportsmen faced the probable prospect of having to compete as part of the Russian team following the decision of the conference

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68. SKL:n ptk., 21.1., 22.3.1916.
69. *Suomen Urheilulehti* 5.1., 20.1., 3.2., 10.2., 17.2.1916; Heikkinen 1977, p. 248.
70. *Suomen Urheilulehti* 11.3., 16.3., 27.7., 7.9.1916.

of national Olympic committees held in Paris in June 1914 that only teams from independent sovereign countries would be eligible to participate in future Games.[71] Finland and Bohemia, for example, both of which had sent teams to the Stockholm Games in 1912, would have automatically failed to qualify under these new conditions. Whatever doubts and problems arose over the possible participation or non-participation of Finnish athletes in the Berlin Games, however, were soon overshadowed by the certainty that it would be impossible to hold the 1916 Games in any case, with the war still raging unabated.

7. The effect of the war on the Finnish parliamentary elections of 1916

Finland's position within the Empire took on a new and unexpected dimension for the imperial government during the course of 1915 when, following the loss of the majority of Poland, Lithuania and Courland to advancing German forces, Finland became the most important remaining non-Russian area on Russia's western border.

The announcement by the Russian Prime Minister, Goremykin, to the State Duma at the beginning of August 1915 that the government had prepared a bill granting Poland local autonomy amounted to little more than a propaganda move at a time when Poland was in the process of being occupied by German forces.[72] Despite the apparent magnanimity of this gesture, it was still easy for Russia's critics to point to Finland as an example of the reality behind the picture the Russian authorities liked to give of their treatment of non-Russian areas within the Empire. As more territory fell under German control, the treatment of the various minority populations within the Russian and German spheres of influence in the area to the north of Poland and the attitudes of these populations to both sets of governments came to represent a

71. Paasivirta 1962, pp. 42—4.
72. v. Rauch 1953, p. 177.

growing test of wills between the two powers.

Some criticism of the imperial government's repressive policies, including its treatment of Finland, was voiced by the opposition parties in the Duma during the course of 1915, but was rejected by the government, which stressed the all-important need to mobilise all available resources in defence of the Empire. Two members of left-wing opposition groups within the Duma, Alexander Kerensky and K. Tseidze, called for the reinstatement of Finnish autonomy, the former being instrumental in drawing up a draft bill to the effect, for which he became widely known in Finland.[73] Had Kerensky's proposal been approved instead of receiving the support of only some thirty, mainly left-wing Duma members as it did, it would have meant the complete repeal of Stolypin's 1910 law removing the right of the Finnish Diet to legislate on matters considered of general imperial interest.[74] Wartime pressures caused the liberal Cadet Party, many of whose members had previously argued in defence of Finland's constitutional rights, to moderate its earlier views and satisfy itself with voicing a general hope that the imperial government would not resort to extreme measures in dealing with Finland.

Faced in the early months of 1916 with the decision as to whether to allow normal elections in Finland the following summer to go ahead, the imperial government was forced to once again reassess its attitude towards Finland's autonomous position following the uncovering by military intelligence of the fact that Finnish volunteers were being recruited and trained in Germany.[75] In deciding to allow the holding of elections, the Russian government probably hoped that the focus of public attention in Finland would as a result return to purely domestic affairs. No doubt it was also hoped that separatist sentiments and left-wing agitation would diminish to more manageable proportions. The elections would, the argument went, serve to channel political activities into conventional forms of expression and put a brake on the appeal of extra-parliamentary action. The Tsar's advisors were well aware, on the basis of prior experience, that Russian power in

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73. HS 5.8., 11.8.1915; *Työmies* 10.9., 15.9.1915; Hbl 6.8.1915.
74. HS 5.8., 11.8.1915; Hbl 6.8.1915; *Työmies* 10.9., 15.9.1915.
75. Turpeinen 1980, pp. 78, 104, 200.

Finland had never been seriously threatened by the workings of the Finnish representative system and that the Finnish Diet had always proved amenable to cooperating with the imperial authorities.

The St. Petersburg government was also aware that the decision to allow free elections in Finland might prove a useful example in any international debate between Russia and Germany about the treatment of non-Russian nationalities within the Empire. With the Western powers increasingly stressing the ideological aspects of the war and clearly seeing Russia's 'reactionary' reputation as something of a liability, the imperial government saw the potential of the Finnish elections to serve as an example of Russia's enlightened policies in this quarter.

The result of the July elections brought a significant change in the balance of power between the parties in Finland, with the socialists gaining a slender majority of 103 seats against a non-socialist total of 97 seats in the new Diet, a result unique in the whole of Europe. In domestic terms, the new Diet, with its Social Democrat working majority, contained within itself the potential for establishing a new type of party politics. Without the benefit of hindsight, however, it was difficult for politicians in 1916 to assess the real significance of the elections, or to accurately predict the likely shape of future developments in Finland.

The war in Europe and the international events which spread out in its wake had come to assume a dominating influence on social life in Finland since the very beginning of hostilities. Finland was faced not only with having to adjust to an expanding dependence on the Russian Empire, but also to an increasing isolation from the rest of Europe. The difficult conditions imposed by the war bred a new sense of resignation. The free exchange of news and information, in particular, virtually disappeared, with only a very few having continued access to reliable unofficial news sources. The heavily censored press was able to provide only a sketchy guide at best to the overall progress of the war, but one which nevertheless perhaps proved satisfactory for the needs of what was after all a scattered and largely rural population.

Popular interest in general issues and events fell away as the everyday problems of securing adequate food and employment gradually assumed greater significance. Political passivity became increasingly widespread, as indicated by the relatively low poll of

55.5% at the 1916 elections. The general atmosphere of fear and uncertainty generated by wartime conditions, and the activities of the military police and the power of the censor in particular, go some way towards explaining why political views and debate feature so surprisingly little in popular correspondence of the time and why relatively little discussion of the war took place at the grass roots level. Few people, if any, in Finnish society had been prepared for Finland's isolation to continue for a matter of years. No previous period within living memory had had such a powerful political, economic and human impact on Finland as that heralded by the outbreak of war in August 1914, one only matched by the period of radical change and upheaval in 1808 and 1809, during which Finland's whole political future had been rewritten and her link with Russia established.

Finland's low level of contacts with the outside world during the war years was partly alleviated by the awareness within the country that Finland was nevertheless fulfilling an important role as a communications and transit link between the Western powers and Russia, a fact reflected in the large rail shipments passing through the country in both directions and the heavy use of the postal and telegraph services. Significant numbers of foreigners travelled through Finland en route to St. Petersburg or on their return from Russia and in such quantities that they cannot have gone unnoticed by the average observer.

As only an indirect combatant in the war Finland never experienced any overt campaign aimed at generating a sense of national solidarity in the war effort similar to that experienced in those countries directly involved in the war. Finland's overall participation in the imperial war effort as such was never more than lukewarm. Finland's experiences during the war were paralleled to some extent by those of minority nationalities in other parts of Europe. The Czechs, Poles, South Slavs and the various nationalities of the Baltic provinces, despite belonging to different empires, all experienced many of the same pressures on their identities. Radical national movements, drawing on each nationality's often long independent national traditions and dedicated to the aim of gaining national independence, appeared throughout these areas, and all courted the more powerful European countries for support.

Growing class tensions represented a parallel pressure to that

coming from the minority nationalities within the societies of the major combatant countries involved in the war. Following the initial superficial social unanimity typical of the early stage of the war, internal social pressures developed sharply throughout Europe as the war progressed during 1915 and 1916, opposition opinion being variously directed against governments, continuing social injustices, or simply at campaigning for an end to the war.

II Finnish Developments Against the Background of the Continuing War and the March Revolution

After her successful territorial gains on the Eastern Front during the course of 1915, Germany turned her military attention in 1916 to mounting a major offensive in the West around Verdun in an attempt to inflict a decisive set-back on the French army, a move which, however, proved unsuccessful. German forces enjoyed considerably more success in repelling Russian troops advancing on the Eastern Front and were able to push into Rumania, which had only shortly previously allied herself to the Entente powers, thereby extending the front down to the Black Sea.

At sea, the Royal Navy had succeeded in maintaining a naval blockade against Germany from the very beginning of the war, cutting off Germany's links with her overseas colonies. This had forced the German Navy to concentrate its resources on submarine warfare aimed at disrupting Britain's important convoy routes from the colonies and the United States. The German campaign against British shipping was extended to embrace operations against all merchant ships from February 1917 onwards. With America's already close economic ties with the Western powers in Europe steadily expanding, this new German threat only served,

however, to reinforce anti-German sentiment in the United States.[1]

As the war progressed, propaganda increasingly emerged as a significant new element in the hostilities. Publicly-stated war aims became a *sine qua none* in the propaganda war. Early German propaganda concentrated on the need to retain the extensive territorial gains her forces had made on both fronts, while that directed towards the East focused on appealing to the nascent nationalist feelings common among the non-Russian nationalities within the Russian Empire and the often widespread sense of ethnic and social superiority felt by them with regard to the Russian population. Western war aims included not only the demand that Germany be expelled from the territory she had occupied but also an appeal to a number of higher ideological ideals. Western emphasis on the importance of popular democracy and national self-determination was designed to counter the authoritarian style of government typical of the central European powers and to ferment unrest among the minority peoples living under German and Austro-Hungarian control. By stressing these higher ideals, the Western powers also hoped to be able to persuade the United States to join the war.[2]

1. Finland's relations with the Russian Provisional Government

The eruption of the March Revolution in St. Petersburg in 1917 came as the climax to a period of mounting domestic tension and increasing popular discontent with Russian involvement in the war against Germany and Austro-Hungary. Opposition opinion in Russia among the liberal middle class, the industrial workforce and the extensive landless peasantry had consistently grown since 1915. Dissatisfaction with the inefficiency of the autocratic imperial government, the disarray of the economy and the inadequacy of food supplies, coupled with rapidly mounting war-weariness, all acted to ferment an explosive growth of social discontent directed against both the person of the Tsar and his government.

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1. Liddell Hart 1930, pp. 214—26, 261—6, 296—7.
2. Th. Schieder 1973, pp. 172—8.

The working class uprising which broke out in mid-March 1917 in St. Petersburg, followed by the mutiny of a number of army units stationed in the capital, quickly led to the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II and the formation of a provisional government drawn from members of the pre-revolutionary Duma. Lvov was named as prime minister, Miljukov, one of the leaders of the Cadet Party, as foreign minister and the Social Revolutionary Alexander Kerensky as minister of justice. Immediate plans were put in hand to establish a National Constituent Assembly to be entrusted with resolving the central issues resulting from the reorganisation of the Empire's political system. A workers' and soldiers' soviet was set up in Petrograd during March, following the example of events during the 1905 Revolution.[3]

The ultimate nature of the new political structure, together with the land question, soon emerged as the two major domestic issues facing the provisional authorities. On the question of the position of the non-Russian nationalities within the Empire, plans were mooted for the establishment of a federal system of government. While the Provisional Government underlined Russia's continuing allegiance to her Western allies and its determination to continue the war against Germany and Austro-Hungary, however, the labour movement increasingly began to demand immediate peace negotiations on the basis of combatants' pre-war borders and an abandonment of post-war reparations claims, and the granting of the right of self-determination to minority nationalities.

The radical political and social aims brought to the fore by the March Revolution rapidly assumed international currency, having a direct impact on public opinion in virtually all of the countries involved in the war and forcing governments to pay renewed attention to their countries' continued role in the war and the possible future position of any minority nationalities living within their borders. Following the revolution, hostilities on the Eastern Front virtually ceased for a short period.

The relative importance of Finland to the Provisional Government was evident from the very first days of its existence with the early dispatch of special envoys to Helsinki and elsewhere in Finland, entrusted with the task of ensuring the

3. Chamberlain I 1954, pp. 73—85.

loyalty of Russian forces stationed in Finland to the new government and thereby eliminating the danger of their possibly intervening in the situation in Petrograd in defence of the deposed Tsar.[4] This primary concern of the Provisional Government was paralleled by a secondary, less urgent interest in preventing possible unrest among the Finnish population which, it was hoped, could be averted by promising future changes in the country's political status. This latter move, designed primarily to secure Finnish loyalty to the new government, also had an international aspect for the Provisional Government, as security for the Petrograd area still remained of decisive importance when Russia remained at war with Germany.

It took only a few days from the outbreak of the revolution in Petrograd for observers in Finland to realise that a political transformation of perhaps unprecedented proportions, and decidedly more far-reaching and extensive than anything that had happened in 1905, was in the making. The sense of freedom and optimism about the future this brought in Finland was immediate and widespread. The scale of the political upheaval in Russia seemed such that many saw the floodgates opened for large-scale governmental and social reform. The deposing of the Tsar seemed to signal the destruction, with one almost unreal stroke, of the whole inflexible governmental framework which, with the exception of its relative impotence during the events of 1905, had held back significant political and social development in Finland. Progress in Finland up until 1917 had been uneven and had allowed a number of national and social tensions to develop into major problems, which had only been further exacerbated by the additional difficulties brought by the war years.

Despite the great sense of freedom felt by the ordinary population in Finland and the general conviction that the 'new Russia' would automatically right the wrongs of the Tsarist régime, the country's political leaders, both socialist and non-socialist, adopted a cautious policy of wait and see with regard to events in Russia. The truth was that the revolution in Petrograd had taken them all largely, if not completely, by surprise. The memory of the rapid development of events during the 1905 Revolution also

4. Polvinen I 1967, 10—16; Upton I 1980, pp. 52—3.

counselled caution until the longer-term effects of what had happened could be appreciated. The adoption of this passive approach was also influenced by the fact that Finland was still at a state of war and that significant numbers of Russian troops, whose future actions could not be entirely safely predicted, remained in the country. All of these factors combined to make Finland adopt a more cautious approach in March 1917 than had been the case in 1905.[5]

The Provisional Government acted quickly to remove the Governor-General, Seyn, and the deputy chairman of the Senate's administrative department, Borovitinov, from office as the most prominent and now unwanted representatives of the Tsarist government in Finland, having them imprisoned and sent to Petrograd under the orders of the commander of the Baltic Fleet. A number of central and local government officials, branded as stalwarts of the Tsarist régime, were forced to resign, as were a large number of civilian and military police. The loss of the latter, however, subsequently proved instrumental in undermining the ability of the authorities to maintain internal order. A significant purge of the Russian officer corps stationed in Finland also took place following the fall of Nicholas II.

With its issue of what became known as the March Manifesto, the Provisional Government, in its first major reformist move in Finland, hoped to establish a viable base for the development of new and improved relations between Russia and Finland. The outcome of discussions between representatives of the new government in Petrograd and Finland's main political leaders, the Manifesto repealed at a stroke all the decrees restricting Finnish autonomy enacted since the February Manifesto of 1899.[6] With this and subsequent moves the Provisional Government established its position, as seen from the Russian perspective, as the arbiter of supreme power in Finland and as the direct inheritor of the authority which had previously been wielded by the Tsar.

This move was followed by the appointment of a new administration by the Provisional Government, after much

5. Paasivirta I 1947, pp. 59—63; Lappalainen 1977, p. 50.
6. Paasivirta I 1947, pp. 64—71; H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 199—200; Upton I 1980, pp. 54—5.

political wrangling among Finland's own politicians. Six seats were allocated to the Social Democrats in the reconstituted Senate and the same number to the non-socialist parties. Oskari Tokoi's nomination as deputy chairman gave the Social Democrats, however, the casting vote. The overall policy of attempting to return Finnish political life to at least a semblance of traditional constitutional legality was also reflected in the recall of the Diet elected in 1916 at the beginning of April 1917. With the restart of regular Diet sittings, it became possible to consider the running of the country's autonomous administration as having been fully returned to normal.

The Provisional Government adopted similar policies to those it used in Finland during the period immediately following the March Revolution in dealing with Russia's other minority nationalities along the Empire's western border. The right to local self-government was granted to the Baltic provinces in April 1917, and local assemblies based on universal suffrage were established in Estonia and Livonia. Marking a completely new departure for Russian policy in these areas, the decision to establish local assemblies was received with enthusiasm by the nationalist movements of the region. The Provisional Government hoped that the move would transfer power away from the small Baltic German élite which had previously dominated local government in the area to the majority populations. Following this development, local soviets began to be set up throughout the Baltic region from the summer of 1917 onwards.[7]

Because of its strategically sensitive geographical location, Poland continued to represent a special case for the new government in Petrograd, as it had done for its predecessor. A special manifesto was issued at the end of March 1917 addressed to the Polish people, who were then mainly living under German occupation, promising extensive future political reforms, in direct response to the declaration made by the German occupying forces in October 1916 announcing the German intention to restore the Polish monarchy.[8]

Ensuring a favourable Finnish attitude towards the new status

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7. v. Rauch 1953, pp. 193—5.
8. Ibid., pp. 190—1; Chamberlain I 1954, p. 103.

quo in Petrograd, thereby resulting in a restoration of Finnish loyalty towards the imperial government, lay at the heart of the Provisional Government's policies towards Finland. Despite the relative calm then existing along the Eastern Front, the Provisional Government was well aware that it was in no position to ignore the potentially explosive situation existing between Russia and Germany. It was thus all the more important to those in Petrograd that Finland should not be allowed to slip out from under Russian control or break away from her political ties to the Empire.

A certain degree of support for the Russian war effort was undoubtedly expected from Finland by the Provisional Government in Petrograd, despite the suspicions about the depth of Finnish loyalty which had taken further root since Russian intelligence had confirmed that Finnish volunteers were continuing to be trained in Germany. Kerensky's three trips to Finland during the spring of 1917, in his new role as minister of justice, indirectly reflected the political and strategic importance the Provisional Government attached to Finland. Kerensky's references to what he called the 'German threat' in his various speeches made in Finland, such as the one he gave in Helsinki in May, were clearly meant to make the Finns aware of the seriousness of the international situation and at the same time reinforce Finnish loyalty towards the Empire.[9]

The low-key approach adopted by the Provisional Government in Finland was very much part of its more extensive and essentially flexible pacification policy, with its careful recognition of minority national identities, followed throughout the Empire's western border area. The real extent of the concessions the Provisional Government was willing to make to these non-Russian nationalities, however, took time to fully emerge. The imperial government remained concerned at all costs not to allow the integrity and unity of the Empire to be seriously undermined, and was not slow to brand as 'separatist' any moves which threatened to lead in this direction. The defence of Russian imperial interest against Germany, if necessary at the cost of further prolonging the war, lay at the heart of the Provisional Government's concerns.

The increased militancy of the working class which emerged in

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9. Polvinen I 1967, pp. 35, 85; The Russian Provisional Government 1917 I, p. 340.

the latter half of March 1917 in Finland on the heels of the revolution in Petrograd spoke of a widespread sense of release from earlier social restrictions. The very extent of the demonstrations, mass meetings and strikes which ensued reflected a general feeling that the country had at last been freed from a long period of artificial political and social restraint. The semi-ideological, semi-intuitive belief that the working class now had the opportunity to 'make history' played an important part in underpinning popular optimism of the time. The Social Democrats and the trade unions, in particular, saw their memberships suddenly expanded. The majority of the newcomers, the 'March men' as they were known, were young and lacked any prior experience of belonging to large organised movements and tended as a result to feel little allegiance to the past traditions of the Left. The result of this sudden influx of new members was little short of an internal revolution within the labour movement, bringing with it an inevitable redistribution of power. As society as a whole gradually slipped towards increased instability, the labour movement also came to embrace many whose allegiance to the movement's professed aims was at best questionable and who were simply carried along on the wave of change and reform which appeared to be overtaking the country.[10]

Following the forced resignation of many government officials and the losses of personnel experienced by the police forces in the majority of urban centres which had taken place in the wake of the March Revolution, the administration in Finland found itself faced with what amounted to uncontrolled social turmoil.[11] The restoration of order was also complicated by the fierce debate which had developed in the meantime over who ultimately had the right to wield power and who was to decide the fate of the new rights and reforms being so loudly clamoured for from all quarters.

The demand for an eight-hour working day campaigned for by workers in heavy industry was quickly acceded to by employers. A similar reduction in working hours for the rest of industry was debated in the Diet. The lack of any legislation on the issue, however, saw the wave of strikes in support of a uniform reduction

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10. Paasivirta I 1947, p. 101; Lappalainen 1977, pp. 64—9; H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 260—2.
11. Upton I 1980, pp. 107—136; Kylävaara 1967, pp. 57—60.

in working hours swell and extend to embrace the rural population by May 1917.[12]

The unresolved conflict between the established social order and the promise of change brought by the revolution was also reflected in the contrast that continued to exist between a democratically elected Diet on the one hand and largely undemocratic municipal and rural local government councils on the other. The real power behind local food distribution committees also continued to remain concentrated in the hands of a privileged few. Working class unrest was often directed against local councils as a result, as in Turku, stretching local government resources to the extreme.[13] With governmental authority under increasing threat, the Senate was forced to dispatch a number of its members to the provinces in an effort to calm tempers. The gulf between the non-socialists and the labour movement only continued to widen, however, fuelled by increasingly bitter wrangling over who decided what and deepening mutual fear and distrust. Workers' demands for social reforms were often seen by many non-socialist politicians as only the beginnings of an attempt to completely overturn the established balance of power in society, forcing them as a result to retreat yet further into inflexible opposition to any demands for change.

Finnish society, with its long tradition of patriarchal values and established and inflexible social and political mores, found itself in the spring of 1917 faced, somewhat late in the day, by a swelling tide of demands for radical change. With the fall of the autocracy and the collapse of an important pillar supporting the traditional social fabric and political status quo within Finland, the pattern of future developments appeared shrouded in uncertainty.

2. Finnish party political attitudes towards the independence question during the spring of 1917

In addition to growing social unrest, the weeks immediately following the March Revolution brought with them a whole host of

12. Rasila 1966A, pp. 111—16; H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 220—3.
13. H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 226—8; Upton I 1980, pp. 116—18.

other changes in Finnish society. The freeing of political detainees and the return of those exiled to Siberia symbolised for many the new sense of freedom which had developed; Svinhufvud, on his return to Finland, received an extensive welcome. It was also around this time that the Finnish volunteer battalion which had been serving with the German Army on the Eastern Front near Riga since the autumn of 1916 was transferred to Libau for further training.

The effective restoration of autonomy, which had taken place without any Finnish participation in the revolutionary events of March, caused a significant number of Finnish politicians to feel a strong sense of debt towards the new government in Petrograd. Prominent Russian opposition figures, including some who had been vocal in the defence of Finnish rights, now sat as members of the Provisional Government. These included Kerensky, who had strongly argued Finland's case in the Duma in 1915, and who even found himself honoured with popular dance tunes named after him in Finland as a result, and Miljukov, who had strongly opposed the passing of the legislation enshrining the supremacy of imperial interest in 1908.

The wave of optimism about the possibility of a rapid peace which spread through Finland during the spring of 1917 also owed its origin, indirectly, to the March Revolution. People came to hope and believe that the war would come to an end solely through the influence of international democratic opinion, even without conventional peace negotiations. The international labour movement was particularly prominent in arguing the case for a rapid peace, as was the labour movement in Finland, both responding to what they saw as a new role for the Left. Not that the belief in the restoration of peace and the power of compromise was restricted to the Left alone, as the enthusiasm of some student circles and a large number of liberals for the idea showed.[14]

The March Revolution was seen by many as heralding a new period in Finnish history which would see society freed from the limbo it had been trapped in and new political and national freedoms finally achieved. The depth of this conviction was reflected in the small, but steadily increasing number of public

14. *Sunnuntai* 6.5., 13.5.1917. Also see Henning Söderhjelm's letter of 4.6.1945 to the author.

figures and others who began to demand the granting of complete Finnish independence subsequent to March 1917.[15] Socialists and non-socialists were united in seeing the March Revolution as instrumental in freeing both Russia and Finland from the burden of the past. Expectations were universally high about the future and what it might hold. The belief that Russia was changing and changing for the better, and in a way which would benefit Finland, and that the two countries would be able to develop good relations as a result came to be widely accepted. The importance of establishing cultural contacts with the newly liberal Russia which was emerging was emphasised by the poet Eino Leino, writing in the weekly magazine *Sunnuntai* which he edited. Danielson-Kalmari, the historian, went so far in a speech in Helsinki on 25 March 1917 as to compare the revolution in Petrograd to the French Revolution of 1789, arguing that Eastern Europe was entering upon a similarly decisive historical period to that which had overtaken Western Europe following the Paris uprising.[16]

Although the traditional conservative views and attitudes typical of the ruling élite during the nineteenth century largely disappeared from public debate following the March Revolution, they did not disappear completely. Viktor Magnus von Born, an aristocrat of the old guard, for example, appealed to the Provisional Government at the end of March to withhold approval of the proposed new Senate in which the Social Democrats would enjoy a slim majority; to no avail, however, as it turned out.[17]

Despite the radical change in government in the Russian capital, the leaderships of the older non-socialist parties, the Young and Old Finns and the Swedish People's Party, remained singularly committed in their political aims and policies to the style of politics which had been adopted in the campaign for Finnish rights from 1899 onwards. The members of these parties were united in their shared sense of historical continuity deriving from the part they had all taken in the political and cultural struggle to maintain Finnish autonomy. The autonomous ideal had not dimmed for them over the years. Their respect for constitutional values, however, effectively restricted the range of long-term

15. Paasivirta I 1947, pp. 103—6.
16. *Sunnuntai* 25.3., 15.4.1917; US 26.3.1917.
17. Estlander 1931, p. 674.

policy options open to them and their room for day to day political manoeuvre. Their view of history was essentially conservative and based on the conviction that little permanent or valuable could, or was likely to be achieved through revolutionary means. All three parties looked to the Provisional Government, which they saw as essentially anti-revolutionary and liberal and a power to counter the groundswell of political upheaval and mass unrest, for support against the potential excesses of the Left.

The attitudes of the various leaders of the established non-socialist parties during the spring of 1917 were also strongly shaped by the realities of the situation that Finland found herself in. The continuing presence of Russian forces on Finnish soil inevitably served to restrain political ambition during the discussion of potential future policy ideas. Hopes remained very much alive, however, that the future would bring a definite, if gradual change in Finland's position, fed by the widespread optimistic view that the March Revolution represented only one part of a wider overall process of change affecting Russia. Any change in Finland's status would take place constitutionally, through negotiation and without undermining Finnish loyalty towards the Provisional Government, it was argued and generally accepted by all the major non-socialist parties at their party conferences during April and May 1917.[18]

A small number of pro-Entente sympathisers represented the only significant divergent group of opinion within the non-socialist camp during the spring of 1917. With their focus of attention on events taking place mainly outside the Baltic area, however, although not actually shunned, they tended to be looked on as being somewhat detached from the demands of the moment. V. A. Lavonius, for example, spoke warmly at the party conference of the Young Finns of the ideals of Woodrow Wilson and the strength of internationalism and its potential to revitalise the world. A small group of academic and literary intellectuals sympathetic to the aims of the Entente powers became associated with the *Ad Interim* magazine, which had become a prominent voice in the latter stages of the war in warning against the danger of a spread of German influence in Finland.[19] In the final analysis,

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18. Paasivirta I 1947, pp. 114—28.
19. HS 16.4.1917; Rantavaara II 1979, pp. 83—5; Tyyni Tuulio 26.4.1978.

however, those who actively identified themselves with the Entente cause lacked a practical powerbase and influence in day to day politics.

Attitudes towards the question of Finland's political status and possible future were sharply polarised between the younger and older generations within the non-socialist parties. Younger party members generally felt themselves much less tied to the type of policies inherited from the earlier struggle for Finnish rights than their older colleagues. Coming to political maturity in the period following 1899, they sensed the need for a reassessment of their parties' aims and ideals. Complete national independence became their adopted motto. The very fact of the March Revolution, as the younger generation saw things, required a rethink of political ideals and the abandonment of outmoded and outdated policies. The new duty of Finnish politicians was seen as one of putting Finland's interests before those of the Empire, as argued in the pages of the two newspapers closest to the supporters of this view, *Uusi Päivä* and *Svenska Tidningen.*

The progress of the war and the March Revolution were seen as having helped, and as likely to continue to help, the Finnish cause by this young generation of Finnish politicians. Their opinions were also influenced by their links with and sympathy for the aims and intentions of the volunteer movement. While few young politicians were willing to openly express this tie, it can often be seen behind their enthusiasm for radical policies and public statements. Although these young politicians found themselves in the minority at all the party conferences of the non-socialist parties, including that of the Swedish People's Party, their vocal arguments ensured publicity for their radical views. They nevertheless enjoyed a notable success at the Swedish People's Party conference, where a motion clearly putting the case for eventual Finnish independence was accepted.[20]

The Agrarian Party represents something of a special case in this instance, as its supporters became increasingly confident following the events of March 1917 that it would only be a matter of time before Finland gained a greater measure of independence. The idea of a 'free association' between Finland and Russia was

20. Paasivirta I 1947, pp. 115, 121, 125—8.

discussed by the party's parliamentary group in April, but this was soon supplanted by a call for total independence. Santeri Alkio outlined a demand for complete national sovereignty at the end of May, but this never came to be publicly advocated by the party's parliamentary group following calls for caution from within and outside the party and the realisation of the danger of such a move with the continued presence of Russian troops in the country.[21]

The revolution in the Russian capital took the Finnish labour movement by surprise almost as much as it did other sections of society and was initially seen as returning both Russia and Finland to a similar situation to that which had ensued after the 1905 Revolution, with the difference that the fall of the autocracy would inevitably mean more far-reaching changes for the future than had been conceivable in 1905. The Finnish labour movement, however, never proved able or willing to develop close ties with the Provisional Government. The socialist leader Kullervo Manner's emphasis on the need to defend the 'rights of the Diet and the Finnish people' during his inaugural speech as the new speaker of the Diet at the beginning of April, and Yrjö Mäkelin's publicly-expressed hopes for the development of independent Finnish political activity free from Russian-imposed restrictions, typify the independent line adopted by the Social Democrats.[22] Domestic events since 1899, together with the impact of the more recent war years, had added a distinctly nationalist tone to the Finnish labour movement's demands and hopes for radical social reform. No attempt was made to gloss over Finland's exposed position as a small country which had been subjected to continual pressure from its great power neighbour. Disliking both the imperial government that had gone before and the Finnish authorities, which they wrote off merely as an extension of the former, the socialists saw a wider degree of real autonomy or total sovereignty for Finland as necessary to open up the way for the social reforms which had hitherto been blocked by both the imperial authorities and reactionary elements within Finnish society. While the events of March 1917 and afterwards engendered a general sense of optimism within the movement,

21. Mylly 1978, p. 39.
22. Paasivirta I 1947, pp. 130—8; H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 212—3.

they also, however, caused much debate among the leadership about how to react to the new Russian régime. The socialist majority in the Diet and the unrest at the movement's grass roots level pointed the socialist leaders towards the need to opt for some kind of political initiative.

As the labour movement's enthusiasm for the Provisional Government waned, its attachment to what was seen as the 'new Russia', the oppressed Russian masses represented by the Russian socialist movement, which had been so central in the 1905 Revolution, only deepened. The cautious attitude of the Provisional Government towards granting Finland more control over her own affairs, together with Kerensky's public emphasis on the need to concentrate national resources on defence of the Empire, served to confirm the movement in its conviction that the Provisional authorities fundamentally differed little from their autocratic predecessor.

Oskari Tokoi, speaking before the Diet on 20 April, in arguing the case for complete Finnish independence, focused on two major themes. Emphasising the strengthening of the sense of national identity which had taken place in Finland in recent years and especially following the introduction of oppressive Russian policies at the turn of the century, he also openly referred to the existence of the volunteer movement, the first time this had been admitted to in such an official context, and expressed his sympathy with its motives. 'The pattern of social, economic and cultural development in Finland has been so different from that which has prevailed in Russia,' Tokoi argued, 'that there should be no question of uniting these two societies in any way in which one or the other would suffer.' Tokoi nevertheless showed himself not to be completely free of the optimistic spirit of the times in his affirmation that there were still good grounds for developing harmonious Finnish-Russian relations on the basis of what he described as a 'union' between 'a free Finland alongside a free Russia'.[23]

Developments in the international situation in the spring of 1917 and in particular the increasingly vocal debate about the possibilities of a rapid peace then spreading across Europe also

23. VP 1917 ptk., pp. 46—8; Paasivirta I 1947, pp. 107—9: Upton I 1980, pp. 78—9.

proved the source of some considerable optimism for the Finnish labour movement. The Finnish socialists were able to establish their first real contacts of the war with their fellow socialists abroad at the various meetings between representatives of national socialist parties which took place in Stockholm on the initiative of the Dutch-Scandinavian committee of the Second International to discuss the overall prospects for peace in Europe and the possibility of presenting a socialist peace initiative. Events in Russia also gave the movement increased cause for optimism when it became clear that the general situation there was somewhat more fluid than had at first been supposed and that the labour movement was steadily acquiring more influence.

The leadership of the labour movement, although wanting to appear to be taking an active part in the debate about Finland's position within the Empire, found it difficult to decide on a practical and effective policy on the question, preferring in the end to experiment with a number of policy ideas. The two Finnish Social Democratic representatives sent to Stockholm during the spring, K. H. Wiik and Yrjö Sirola, nevertheless emphasised the necessity, for what turned out to be largely national reasons, of achieving Finnish independence. The independence of small national groupings, it was argued, was a natural historical development, but one which, in Finland's case, was threatened by the ambiguous attitude of the new Provisional Government. Wiik's and Sirola's views met with a mixture of support and opposition, depending largely on representatives' different interpretations of the revolution in Russia as either a positive social development or simply as a welcome weakening of Russia's imperial integrity. Overall, however, the Finnish socialists were forced to conclude from their experience in Stockholm that their advocacy of Finnish independence had gained them relatively little sympathy and few friends in the international labour movement.[24]

The Social Democrats established contacts with the various Russian socialist parties then active in Petrograd, the Mensheviks, the Social Revolutionaries, the Bolsheviks and the Plekhanov group, at the beginning of May, in an attempt to clarify the general attitude of the revolutionary movement towards the Finnish

24. Kirby 1974, pp. 78.80; H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 215—6.

question. The Bolsheviks emerged as the group clearly most favourable towards the Finnish case, while most of the others, commanding the major part of the power and influence within the local soviets, proved largely unwilling to commit themselves.[25]

The Finnish Senate's proposal for a reform of the structure of governmental authority in Finland and giving extended powers to the Senate, set out to the Provisional Government at the beginning of April, had met with some resistance in Petrograd. A special constitutional committee set up by the Lvov government concluded that the Provisional authorities were in no position to modify Finland's status in relation to the rest of the Empire and that only the National Constituent Assembly, when it met, would be entitled to fully discuss the major aspects of the issue. This interpretation of the situation was strongly supported throughout the Russian press. Kerensky, an influential member of the Provisional Government, described the Finnish proposal as aiming to 'overturn' the very basis of established relations between Finland and the Empire.[26]

A similar view was repeated to a Finnish delegation led by Oskari Tokoi which visited Petrograd at the end of May during discussions between the two sides on the issue on 23 May.[27] The bill finally put to the Diet at the beginning of June by the Senate, aimed at providing some form of interim organisation and covering the extension of the Senate's powers, turned out to be a much watered-down version of the original proposal for a larger-scale transfer of governmental prerogative away from Petrograd to the Finnish assembly following the consistent Russian resistance the original had encountered. It retained the Provisional Government as the final arbiter in the approval of new legislation, the dissolution of the Diet and the nomination of important government officials.[28] Although aware that in its modified form the bill provided for only a marginal increase in the Senate's powers, the

25. On the attitudes of the various Russian socialist parties to Finland's position, see Paasivirta I 1947, pp. 177—82; Polvinen I 1967, pp. 52—8; H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 213—15.
26. Upton I 1980 pp. 80—1, 152.
27. See Evert Huttunen's speech on 22.5.1917 and Yrjö Mäkelin's on 25.5.1917 (VP 1917 ptk., pp. 302—3, 330).
28. Paasivirta I 1947, pp. 167—9.

leaders of the established non-socialist parties nevertheless saw it as a step forward, if only largely one from a practical administrative point of view.[29] Reform, however superficially meagre, was seen by the non-socialists as cause for some measure of optimism about the future.

3. The problem of supreme governmental authority

The resignation of the Cadet leader Milyukov as Foreign Minister and Gutshkov as Minister of War from the Provisional Government in May and their replacement by Menshevik and Social Revolutionary politicians was seen as clear confirmation by the Social Democratic leadership in Finland that the power and influence of the Russian labour movement was in the ascendant, as the party had been led to think through its contacts with the various socialist parties active in the Russian capital. This apparent shift in the balance of power in Russia was seized on by the party in June during its annual conference, when the leadership aligned itself to all intents and purposes behind a call for complete Finnish independence. In a bid to speed up progress towards achieving real reform of the Senate's powers, the Social Democratic leaders, with the tacit support of Tokoi and the other socialist members of the Senate and what appears to have been similar support from some non-socialists as well including the Agrarian Party under Alkio, decided at the end of June to appeal directly for support for the Finnish cause to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets then meeting in Petrograd.[30] This move was paralleled by increased calls by the socialists for the Finnish Diet to adopt a more active role in the campaign to secure national independence.[31]

Following discussions with the Finnish socialist delegation attending the Congress of Soviets, the Menshevik and Social Revolutionary majority approved a special resolution calling for

29. Ibid., p. 169.
30. UP 15.5., 29.5., 5.6.1917; SvT 30.5.1917.
31. Paasivirta I 1947, pp. 189—91; Polvinen I 1967, p. 73; H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 216—17.

the wide-scale transference of governmental power in Finland, excluding that relating to foreign and defence issues, from the Provisional Government to Finland's own political institutions. The Bolshevik minority at the Congress repeated its support for granting complete independence which had been communicated by Alexandra Kollontai shortly previously during her visit as official representative of the Bolshevik Party to the Social Democrats' party conference held in June in Helsinki.[32] Compared to the other socialist parties, however, the political influence and power of the Bolsheviks continued to be relatively minimal at this stage.

The majority resolution on the Finnish question approved at the Congress of Soviets was seen by the Social Democrats as signalling a change in the general Russian attitude towards Finland and as providing the basis for a renewed Finnish political initiative directed towards achieving a reform of governmental power in Finland aimed at guaranteeing the country complete internal independence.[33] The need to come to some form of accommodation with the Provisional Government, previously recognised as the major arbiter in the Finnish question, appeared to have receded. Hopes now focused on the Diet as the body most likely to champion the struggle for governmental reform, in preference to the Senate and the modest negotiated settlement it had managed to achieve. In its completely redrafted form, the bill proposed the transfer of governmental power directly to the Diet in all matters relating to Finnish internal affairs, leaving only foreign and defence questions to imperial jurisdiction. Despite the revolutionary change it outlined for the structure of government in Finland, the bill was carefully debated by the Diet according to standard procedure, underlining the general desire to adhere as closely as possible to the letter of the law and be seen to be acting constitutionally and in line with the advocacy of constitutional governmental action which had featured so prominently in Finnish political life for most of the previous twenty years. The socialists also hoped that this approach would help gain the

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32. Paasivirta I 1947, pp. 192—3; Polvinen I 1967, 74—80; Kirby 1979, p. 43. For Kollantay's speech at the Social Democratic Party's conference (6.1917), see SDP:n puoluekokous ptk., pp. 56—9.
33. Paasivirta I 1947, pp. 206—7.

support of the non-socialist groups in the Diet for the bill.

The reluctance of the Social Democrats to adopt a conciliatory attitude, if only temporarily, towards their political rivals, however, saw them decide to avoid entering into meaningful discussions with their non-socialist colleagues on the issue, despite the obvious sympathy felt among the ranks of those non-socialists dedicated to the cause of Finnish independence. The overall attitude of the socialists to the problem was summed up in Yrjö Mäkelin's speech to the Diet on 10 July, and in particular his declaration that: 'Based as this bill is on reinstating rights previously enjoyed by the Finnish people, I am sure that it represents the unshakeable will of the majority of the population. We cannot draw back from the decision which must be made. When this bill becomes law, as it must, it will determine Finland's status until her position among the nations of Europe is finally resolved.'[34]

The problem of what attitude to adopt to the proposed bill reforming the powers of the Finnish authorities provoked a clear division of opinion among the non-socialist parties in the Diet. Those otherwise dedicated to the cause of independence saw the bill as essentially going as far as was practically possible in the circumstances. The bill's opponents, in contrast, and there were many more of them than its supporters in the non-socialist camp, emphasised the need for caution in relations with the Provisional Government, and underlined their anxiety and fear that the extended powers proposed for the Diet would seriously undermine the traditional division of power within the country. Those opposing the bill came therefore to reaffirm the fact, as they saw it, that supreme authority in Finnish internal affairs belonged, if only temporarily, with the Provisional Government in Petrograd.[35]

During early July, the Finnish Social Democrats received a visit from a delegation of Menshevik politicians from Petrograd, whose members attempted to cool local enthusiasm for the proposal. This attempt to soften the Finnish initiative was indirectly linked to the actions of the Ukrainian Central Soviet in Kiev in de-

34. VP 1917 ptk., pp. 877—80.
35. Paasivirta I 1947, pp. 215—20; Wahlbäck 1968, pp. 17—18.

manding self-government for the whole Ukrainian area, a move which had precipitated serious disagreements within the Provisional Government and led to the resignation of all the Cadet Party ministers. The failure of the major Russian offensive against the Germans on the Eastern Front led by General Brusilov at the beginning of July, which had been particularly supported by Kerensky and to a lesser extent by the Menshevik and Social Revolutionary-dominated All-Russian Congress of Soviets, in spite of Bolshevik opposition, and which began to become clear from 16 July onwards, only added fuel to the government's problems in Petrograd.[36]

The Bolsheviks attempted to exploit the sudden change in the overall situation, initiating an attempted uprising against the Provisional Government in Petrograd.[37] Taking his cue from the apparent about-turn in the Provisional Government's fortunes, which seemed in socialist eyes a positive development from Finland's point of view, especially coming so soon after the Menshevik attempt to dampen Finnish enthusiasm, the Finnish Prime Minister, Oskari Tokoi, announced to the Diet on 17 July that following recent events the Provisional Government was no longer in any position to stand in the way of approving the Finnish proposal for governmental reform.[38] The bill was finally passed on its last reading by a sharply divided Diet on 18 July by a large majority (136—55), made up of socialists, pro-independence non-socialists and some members of the Agrarian Party, opposed by the hard core of the old-established non-socialist parties. Three members of the Swedish People's Party, including the conservative Ernst Estlander, felt so strongly that the new law undermined the basis of the country's constitution that they requested to be allowed to resign from the Diet forthwith.[39]

Soon after the bill's approval in Helsinki, the Diet decided, in complete contradiction to the logic of the new legislation, to request the Provisional Government's approval for the Finnish move, despite the fact that as a result of the bill the Provisional

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36. Chamberlain I 1954, pp. 157—8, 163—5.
37. Ibid., pp. 167—70; Deutscher 1978, pp. 134—7.
38. VP 1917 ptk., p. 1033.
39. See Ernst Estlander's G. G. Rosenqvist's and A. Frey's notes dated 19.7, 20.7 and 23.7.1917 (Eduskunnan arkisto 1917 I VP).

Government was, from the Finnish point of view, no longer entrusted with supreme legislative authority in Finnish affairs. Despite the radical nature of the Diet's decision, the Social Democrat majority clearly wanted to minimise the scale of the break in relations with the government in Petrograd. This concession to what was known to be the majority Russian view about the Provisional Government's right to exercise supreme authority in Finland would, the Social Democrats hoped, go some way towards softening the former's opposition to the reform.

For all its apparent loss of control, the Provisional Government, however, had proved able to maintain its hold on Petrograd and Russia as a whole. Appealing to the need for national unity in the face of the continuing dangerous situation at the front, it was able to put down the attempted uprising organised by the Bolsheviks, and followed this by banning the party's activities and closing down its newspapers. In a move designed to strengthen the government's hand, Lvov was replaced as Prime Minister by Kerensky. Announcing its adoption of a compromise solution over the question of Ukrainian self-government, Kerensky's new administration declared its determination to continue the struggle against the enemy without and social anarchy within the Empire.[40]

This consolidation of the Provisional Government's position and its grip on the reins of power also served to strengthen its determination in its dealings with Finland. This was reflected in the increasingly sharp nature of the criticism of Finnish affairs and the new law in particular which had begun to appear in many pro-government newspapers from the end of June onwards and which continued undiminished into August.[41] Finland's open 'attempt at secession' was described by *Rjetsh* as taking the country into the camp of Russia's enemies and as serving to make Finland a threat not only to future national security but also more particularly to that of the imperial capital. The same paper was not slow to draw its readers' attention to Germany's interest in the possibility of Finnish independence. Back in June, *Denj* had described the demand for Finnish independence made at the Social Democratic

40. Chamberlain I 1954, pp. 184—5, 188.
41. Commentaries appearing in *Rjetsh* and *Denj* were quoted extensively in the Finnish press of the time. See, for example, *Uusi Päivä* 26.5., 10.8.1917.

party conference as amounting to little more than a stab in the back for Russia and the Provisional Government.

It did not take long for the government in Petrograd to decide that its only practical response to the Finnish move lay in dissolving the intransigent and rebellious Finnish assembly. The sharp division within opinion in Finland over the bill and the deepening struggle developing between the socialists and non-socialists in its wake gave added impetus to the idea. The announcement of the dissolution of the Diet and the holding of new elections was made on 31 July, and was subsequently accepted by the Senate by a slim majority of non-socialist votes and the casting vote of the Governor-General (7—6). Svinhufvud, as Attorney-General, appears to have supported the Senate's majority view.[42]

The Russian offensive begun at the beginning of July had caused the administration in Petrograd to embark on a review of Russian military forces, including the state of its units stationed in southern Finland, to counter any possible increase in tension between Russia and Germany. A Cossack division was transferred to Finland on 12 July and reinforced on 3 August by a cavalry division and an infantry brigade.[43] This increase in the Russian military presence in Finland and using troops felt to be loyal to the provisional authorities was designed to strengthen overall defences against a possible German landing and at the same time to prevent the outbreak of unwanted 'separatist unrest' in Finland. It seems clear that the Russian military command was aware, at least to some extent, of the plans of the Finnish activist groups abroad and within Finland to ferment a popular uprising as and when Russia's hold on the country appeared to weaken. By late August and early September, the total strength of Russian forces in Finland had risen to some 100,000 men.[44]

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42. Paasivirta I 1947, pp. 228—9; E. W. Juva II 1961, pp. 48—9; Upton I 1980, pp. 183—9.
43. Polvinen I 1967, p. 93; Upton I 1980, p. 178—9.
44. Rauanheimo 1950, pp. 165—7; Lappalainen 1977, p. 99.

4. Trade difficulties and growing internal social unrest

Finnish-Russian trade relations began to take a new and decisive turn from the spring of 1917 onwards as Finland's close association with the Russian war economy which had developed between 1914 and 1916 began to disintegrate. This transformation, which ultimately resulted in a virtual complete halt to Finland's sizeable exports to the rest of the Empire, was not immediately felt in heavy industry, with its pattern of long-term contracts, until the summer by which time its extent could no longer be ignored. No new orders were placed by Russian buyers and a number of earlier contracts were cancelled. For those other sectors of industry more closely tied to the war boom, such as the textile, rubber and leather-working industries, however, the drop in production was much more sudden.[45] The fall-off in orders in these latter industries caused a rapid increase in the level of unemployment, which had already begun to rise with the halting of fortification work by the Russian authorities in the southern part of the country. This downturn in the overall economic situation had extensive and visible social consequences.

The disruption of trade relations between the two countries also exacerbated the exchange situation. While Finnish imports from Russia were reduced to limited supplies of foodstuffs, the Provisional Government continued to spend heavily in Finland to cover the costs of stationing and provisioning Russian forces in the country, a fact which resulted in a steadily growing Finnish rouble surplus. To counter this, the Bank of Finland was forced to adopt a significantly more independent stance than previously towards the rouble exchange rate and allow the rouble's value to fall sharply, which in turn forced the Russian exchequer into intermittently having to draw on its dollar and sterling reserves to purchase the Finnish marks it required. These exchange difficulties served to further restrict trade between the two countries and, in particular, the export of Finnish paper to Russia, reducing trade between the two countries by the autumn of 1917 to little more than barter exchange.[46]

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45. Lento 1955, p. 483; Virrankoski 1975, pp. 188—90.
46. Meinander 1963, pp. 58—60; Pihkala 1980, p. 33.

Food supplies came under increasing strain from early spring 1917, with the situation steadily worsening following the virtual halt of food imports from Russia. Rye imports had been the first to succumb in October 1916, while cereal orders became increasingly uncertain from November and December onwards, and supplies of other grains and flour from Russia ceased completely in February and March 1917.[47] Following a survey of food stocks ordered by the Senate and completed in April showing that the country's stocks of bread cereals available until the next harvest amounted to only some 40% of normal consumption, the government had little choice other than to begin rationing. Bread rationing was introduced in April in Helsinki and in June in the rest of the country.[48] A bill designed to provide the authorities with greater control over food supplies and modelled on comparable Swedish legislation, granting exceptional powers to the Senate to regulate food sales and consumption, was put before the Diet in April and approved and made law at the beginning of June. Fixed price ceilings for foodstuffs were established and stocks requisitioned.[49]

Continual efforts were made by the government to buy cereals from both East and West. Agreement was reached at the end of June with the Provisional Government on the sale of 62,000 tons of cereals over a four month period, which it was hoped would ease the situation until the harvest later in the year. Despite payment for the entire order being promised in advance in an effort to guarantee early shipment, only about a fifth of the total originally ordered, however, ever arrived. Negotiations with the Americans were also held on cereal purchases, resulting in a contract for a similar-sized order to that made with Russia, which was also paid for in advance. The entry of the United States into the war, with its repercussions on American trade, however, inevitably held up shipment of the order across the Atlantic.[50]

Spiralling unemployment, the worsening food supply problem and increasing inflation gave added impetus to the growing working-class unrest which had emerged in the spring of 1917.

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47. Pihkala 1980, p. 33.
48. Rantatupa 1979, pp. 65—9.
49. Ibid., pp. 71—6.
50. Tanner 1948, pp. 83—4; Paasivirta 1961, pp. 76—7; J. Paavolainen 1979, pp. 129—34.

Rumours about speculators, secret stockpiling of food and the authorities' alleged aim of 'starving' the urban poor only served to fuel the flames of popular disaffection, which was further deepened by the generally widespread suspicion felt among the ordinary population towards local government officials and those in charge of overseeing the food supply situation. Demonstrations and other mass action against local councils, such as the butter riots which took place in Turku and Helsinki, were typical of the wave of popular unrest which spread through the country during the late summer of 1917. Although only one aspect of the country's heightening internal social tension, popular reaction to the lack of adequate food supplies was probably the most visible sign of this unrest.[51] The continuing lack of adequate police forces served to prevent the authorities from calling any real halt to the unrest. Political developments in the wake of the dissolution of the Diet also acted as a new and additional factor in deepening the schism which had opened up in Finnish society.

5. The question of Finland's future status

The course of the war during 1917, although not bringing any end to the hostilities in Europe, did see developments which presaged significant changes ahead. The entry of the United States into the war alongside the Western powers at the beginning of April marked a departure away from a purely European struggle, whilst also underlining America's growing great power status. American economic interests had become closely linked with the British and French war efforts between 1914 and 1917, and under President Wilson this economic aspect was reinforced by an increased emphasis on the role of the war as a struggle about the right to national self-determination and democracy, directed first against Germany and the conservative values it represented and subsequently the revolutionary values represented by the Russian Revolution.

While events in Russia in 1917 failed to have a decisive influence on the course of the war, they did nevertheless increase

51. Rantatupa 1979, p. 92.

the pressure for social and political change in various parts of Europe. In Russia itself, attitudes towards the continuing war came to be an important factor in dividing political opinion and determining political allegiances.[52] Kerensky consistently opposed the idea of negotiating a separate peace with Germany, preferring instead to maintain Russia's alliance with the Western powers. The failure of the Russian offensive on the Eastern Front begun on his initiative at the beginning of July, however, only served to intensify the calls for peace in Russia, among which those of the Bolsheviks were the most uncompromising, with their demand for an immediate end to hostilities.

The centre-left majority of the German National Assembly pressed the government to sound out the possibilities for peace in July 1917, but to little effect. The real power in Germany lay with the military leadership, in the shape of Hindenburg and Ludendorff, who together ensured that all major political decisions were taken with little reference to the Chancellor or the official government. Kerensky's failed July offensive in the East was followed on the northern sector of the front by a German counter-attack, which led to the capture of Riga at the beginning of September. German hopes of a Russian collapse, however, were not realised. Parallel to its success on the Eastern Front, the focus of the German Army's military surveillance operations extended into the northern Baltic area, and Germany grew increasingly interested in the possibilities of shaping popular political opinion in Finland.[53]

The position of Kerensky's Provisional Government began to appear increasingly fraught against the background of continuing Russian military setbacks and the growing power of the Bolsheviks, who had begun to recover from the failure of their attempted rebellion in July. At the other end of the political spectrum, conservative opinion committed to a return of the autocracy was also beginning to regroup. Unable to look to support from a national representative assembly as one had yet to be elected, Kerensky called a state conference embracing representatives from across the social spectrum in Moscow at the end of

52. v. Rauch 1968, pp. 19, 22.
53. Carr I 1950, pp. 90—1; Eyck I 1954, pp. 26—9.

August, in the hope of gaining some much-needed backing for his policies. This proved unable, however, to agree on any general consensus on the two central questions of governmental authority and national defence. The beginning of September saw the outbreak of a rebellion led by General Kornilov in a bid by conservative groups to topple the Provisional Government and neutralise the influence and power wielded by the workers' and soldiers' soviets. Sufficiently alarmed by this display of right-wing discontent, the various socialist parties were finally galvanised into forming a united front with Kerensky, enabling the rebellion to be put down.[54]

The Bolsheviks were able to consolidate their position at the expense of the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries. This change in the balance of power between the socialist parties was reflected in September in the Petrograd Workers' and Soldiers' Soviet, when the Bolsheviks gained a majority and Leo Trotsky became chairman. The Bolsheviks immediately followed this with demands for the introduction of extensive social reforms, including the nationalisation of the means of production and the distribution of land to the peasants and a rapid ending of Russia's involvement in the war. With their deliberate distancing of themselves from the Provisional Government and its policies, the Bolsheviks, unlike the more moderate socialist parties, represented an untried and as yet untested political option in Russian politics.

Developments inside Russia, in the Baltic area and in Russian-German relations were naturally of major interest to all sections of Finnish opinion. International events in particular received increased attention in Finland during 1917, especially when compared to their typically limited discussion earlier. Press coverage on events in Europe was no longer subjected to the same degree of censorship as had been common between 1914 and 1916. Sweden and Swedish affairs, in contrast, came to assume a much less central position in the Finnish consciousness than previously. Events in Western Europe and on the Western Front nevertheless remained distant to the average observer. Even such major events

54. Chamberlain I 1954, pp. 200—20. On Kornilov, see Mannerheim I 1951, pp. 227—30.

as the transfer of large numbers of American troops to the European theatre of war received relatively little attention, nor was there much public discussion about the general effect on the war of this development. Geographical distance, in the final analysis, dictated where Finland's main interests lay.

The period immediately following the Provisional Government's dissolution of the Diet marked a new and difficult stage in developments in Finland. The question of possible future national independence, together with the more pressing issue of the country's social problems, shared the centre stage. Both issues were to have a profound impact on the realignment and regrouping of political and social opinion in Finland.

The political efforts of the Social Democrats, which had reached something of a peak with their attempt to push through their bill on a transfer of governmental power, had received an unexpected and sharp setback with the dissolution of the Diet, one which provoked hostility within the party both towards the Provisional Government for instigating the move and towards those of Finland's non-socialists who had been active in opposing the reform.[55] The socialists' overall intentions contained in their proposed reform bill, however, gained the support of non-socialist pro-independence politicians at the beginning of August. Pro-independence commentators, such as those writing for *Uusi Päivä*, described the bill as reflecting the view of the majority of popular opinion of the type of constitutional arrangement best suited to future Finnish-Russian relations. While the socialists were commended for their decision to act on the resolution passed by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets on the Finnish issue, they were nevertheless criticised for having made little attempt to work together with non-socialist groups to gain greater support for the bill.[56] *Svenska Tidningen* echoed a similar view in its support for the socialists' attempt to prevent the Provisional Government from assuming ultimate power over Finnish domestic affairs and in its condemnation of the attitudes of the established non-socialist parties, which were described as having acted in virtual alliance with the Russian authorities against Finnish interests. The

55. Paasivirta II 1949, pp. 21—4.
56. UP 9.8., 10.8.1917.

socialists' decision to request the Provisional Government to approve the reform had, however, in the paper's opinion, shown an unfortunate loss of determination. Both the Senate and the Diet, according to *Svenska Tidningen*, should have refused to accept the Provisional Government's decision to dissolve the Diet.[57]

The role of non-socialist pro-independence politicians as an independent political force began to grow from mid-August onwards. This predominantly young group, which had previously contented itself with internal opposition from within the non-socialist parties, now began to align itself behind a body of older more established politicians, including Svinhufvud, who had up until then preferred to observe developments very much from the sidelines. The debate and publicity surrounding the Diet's reform proposal also indirectly gave added impetus within much of the non-socialist camp to more vocal demands for a greater degree of independence than had hitherto been advocated. Opposition to developments in this direction was declared to be little short of politically bankrupt at a time of declining Russian power and an increasing German military presence in the Baltic. Pro-independence politicians began to demand a united front calling for complete national independence. Parallel to this nationalist case, they also stressed the importance of the need to ensure a non-socialist majority in the new Diet to counter the increasing social unrest affecting the country and what they saw as the inability of the socialists to take decisive control of the situation.[58] A change in the balance of power in the Diet held the prospect for these pro-independence politicians of improving their own political position and of possibly achieving an important say in the country's future moves towards independence.

The established non-socialist parties, with the vocal support of *Uusi Suometar* and *Helsingin Sanomat*, advocated acceptance of the Provisional Government's decision to dissolve the Diet, in line with the non-socialist senators' decision to comply with Petrograd's manifesto to the effect. This essentially conciliatory line was accompanied by a strong rearguard attack on the

57. SvT 10.8., 11.8.1917.
58. UP 22.8.1917; SvT 24.8.1917.

socialists' reform bill, which argued that, for all their activities, the socialists had, in fact, failed to achieve any real improvement in Finland's position.[59] The obvious aim of the non-socialists' campaign was to engineer a shift in popular support away from their socialist opponents, who had successfully consolidated their position during the spring and summer through their role as the major political group most clearly identified with a policy of attempting to gain a greater measure of independence for Finland. The focus of these parties' political activities became centred on a single-minded anti-socialist campaign, in which the socialists were made to bear the brunt of responsibility for the social unrest and disruption afflicting society. The non-socialists' main concern was to ensure the defeat of the socialists in the coming elections .[60]

That the various non-socialist parties were able and willing to sink their difference, which in any case had been mainly inherited from the differences of views over the best way to react to an earlier set of Russian policies, and present something approaching a common front was undoubtedly a result of the success of the Left in gaining a majority in the Diet at the 1916 elections. The concentration of the non-socialists on the negative aspects of Finland's domestic developments subsequent to the March Revolution, while linked to their criticism of the socialists, was also tied to their assessment of Finland's relations with the rest of the Empire. While the socialists clearly hoped that a favourable change in the country's relationship with Russia would also create the basis for progressive domestic social reform, the non-socialists hoped that any change would bring social stability and a halt to any movement towards social revolution in Finland. It was therefore only logical for the non-socialists not to oppose the dissolution of the socialist-controlled Diet. A new assembly with a clear non-socialist majority would, it was thought, guarantee stable social development and a more considered approach to the handling of the question of Finland's future political status.

As the elections drew closer, the leaders of the established non-socialist parties, Ståhlberg, J. R. Danielson-Kalmari and R. A. Wrede, were forced, despite their previous apparent unwillingness

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59. US 10.8., 11.8., 25.8.1917; HS 16.8., 22.8.1917.
60. US 19.8.1917.

to formulate their views with any real clarity, to make their positions clear on the question of Finland's future political status, both to the voting public and to establish their political distance from their fellow non-socialists who had come out in active and open support for national independence.

Wrede declared his support for the ultimate aim of complete internal independence for Finland in mid-August. He remained adamant, however, that Russian opinion would nevertheless have to be taken into consideration in the immediate future. Finland remained, Wrede emphasised, politically and constitutionally a part of the Russian Empire and Russian troops remained stationed in the country.[61] Wrede advocated that an agreement struck between the Finnish Diet and the All-Russian National Constituent Assembly, as and when the latter met, should form the basis for any future settlement of the issue. Wrede readily admitted, nevertheless, that this approach, despite its advantages, would not be without its difficulties. His overall idea depended in large part on the assumption that internal unrest and anarchy in Russia would be short-lived and would inevitably be followed by a more conventional, stable form of government, an analysis that appears to have drawn much of its inspiration from the pattern of events following the 1905 Revolution in Russia.

Wrede thought any attempt to gain total sovereignty and involving completely severing Finland's ties with Russia would be a dangerous and unwise gamble. Russia, he was sure, would not willingly surrender Finland in the certain knowledge that the country could easily fall within the German sphere of influence and thereby become a threat to Petrograd. Finland, Wrede emphasised, lacked the military resources either to free herself from Russia's hold or to defend her independence, were she to gain it. The idea of Finland's possibly achieving independence with foreign support was rejected by Wrede. Wrede was also doubtful that any international guarantees regarding Finland's position would be likely to be forthcoming from a future European peace conference.

In somewhat similar style, Ståhlberg also emphasised the importance of adopting a cautious and consistent policy attitude

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61. Hbl 17.8.1917; HS 17.8.1917; US 17.8.1917.

towards Russia. In an assessment of the situation made at the end of August, he described the socialist-sponsored reform bill as having been 'reckless' and an example of over-ambitious policies which would only undermine the basis of Finland's privileged position within the Empire. Complete internal independence figured nevertheless in his estimation, as in Wrede's, as a reasonable ultimate aim. Ståhlberg was also sympathetic to the idea of future Finnish-Russian relations developing on the basis of a negotiated agreement backed up by possible international guarantees.[62] Demands for complete independence were naive and unrealistic and ignored the fact that Finland's border with Russia ran what he described as 'only a few kilometres' away from the Russian capital, which alone had a population as large as that of the whole of Finland. While Ståhlberg did not deny that Russia's overall position had weakened, he nevertheless saw no reason to assume that its complete collapse was in any way inevitable. Convinced as he was that it was ultimately self-interest which dominated the policies of the great powers, he made no attempt to hide his suspicion that the West's vocal advocacy of national self-determination did not obscure the fact that it remained, in the final analysis, very much a secondary war aim.

Danielson-Kalmari's conservatively traditional view of Finland's future political position as aired in September took some account of the changes in the international situation in the Finnish area that had recently taken place, including the German capture of Riga on 2 September.[63] Although alluding in an article in *Uusi Suometar* on 11 September to the possibility that what he described as 'major world events' might lead to Finland's separation from Russia, he concluded that it was decidedly more likely that Finland would remain part of the Russian Empire at the end of the war, a view which he repeated in similar terms in a speech on 23 September. In line with traditional conservative opinion, Danielson-Kalmari emphasised that past experience pointed to a constitutional agreement between Finland and Russia, giving Finland full autonomy, as being the best guarantor of Finland's future security, pointing to the positive aspects of the

62. HS 28.8.1917.
63. US 11.9., 24.9.1917. See also K. R. Rantakari's letter of 24.8.1917 to Danielson-Kalmari (Danielson-Kalmari collection 5).

earlier union between Sweden and Norway and the dual monarchy in Austro-Hungary. Concentration on complete independence to the exclusion of other possible solutions would only unnecessarily endanger Finland's position. Danielson-Kalmari was nevertheless open-minded enough to accept the possibility that Russia might attempt, again in the light of past experience, to place what Finland might consider unacceptable conditions on its granting Finland independence, such as the return of the province of Viipuri to Russia to guarantee the security of the Russian capital, thereby reinstating the border established in 1721.

Finland's future was very much linked in Danielson-Kalmari's mind with the question of guaranteeing the security of Russia's north-western border, even in the event of Finland's remaining part of the Russian Empire. This would best be achieved, in Danielson-Kalmari's view, by allowing Finland her own army responsible for the complete peacetime defence of the country and thereby removing the need for any Russian military presence in Finland. Danielson-Kalmari was nevertheless careful to stress the importance of ensuring that Finnish territory should never be allowed to form a threat to the defence of Petrograd at times of crisis or war. If Finland's own armed forces were to prove incapable of defending the country, Russia must be allowed the right to transfer military units to Finland to halt enemy advances and, as the situation demanded, to assume command of Finnish forces.

Finland's overall political situation during August and September 1917 was seen by the country's non-socialist pro-independence politicians as essentially fluid and, above all, as one requiring the abandonment of traditional constitutionalist-style policies. Finland, it was claimed, was faced with a unique opportunity, and one which it would be politically irresponsible to pass up, to determine her own future and to aim for complete independence. Finland's hand was seen to have been inestimably strengthened by the internal crumbling of the Russian Empire, coupled with Germany's increasing military presence in the Baltic. In sharp opposition to the views of Wrede and Ståhlberg, pro-independence politicians argued with some vehemence that Finland should avoid any binding agreements with the Provisional authorities designed to guarantee Finland some level of regional autonomy, and instead actively work towards a more radical

solution likely to give the country real independence.

The overall attitude among pro-independence opinion was of a sense of urgency. Although the West's advocacy of national self-determination was seen as potentially favourable towards Finland's case in the long run, in the more immediate future it was thought unrealistic to conclude that Finland must merely bide her time and wait for the peace conference at the end of the war to resolve the independence issue. Finland had to be willing to act on her own behalf to achieve a settlement of her international position, which would then only have to be rubber-stamped by the victors.

Many pro-independence politicians, however, were concerned about the implications of a possible further crumbling of national consensus. Their own attitude towards the socialists during the early autumn was virtually consistently critical, resulting from what was seen as the socialists' ambiguous attitude towards the country's deepening social disorder and revolutionary unrest. Their criticism did not nevertheless extend to an all-out anti-socialist campaign condemning the socialists and everything they represented, as was more typical among their more conservative fellows. This latter style of attack, from which the pro-independence group were keen to disassociate themselves, was seen as self-divisive and as serving to divert attention away from the major theme of the elections, the question of independence.[64]

Svinhufvud's decision to ally himself with the pro-independence movement provided the latter with an important filip to its potential political influence and a leader at one and the same time. As one of the major campaigners for Finnish rights earlier in the century, Svinhufvud commanded wide respect. Svinhufvud's view of post-1905 Russia, which concentrated on the Empire's unsteady political and social development, typified by violent swings between autocracy and anarchy, forced him to conclude that it could only be to Finland's advantage if she was able to break her constitutional links with the Empire. Finland's proximity to the centre of the Russian Revolution might also see increased revolutionary activity within Finland, Svinhufvud feared. In common with a number of other like-minded figures, the

64. UP 18.8.1917; SvT 21.8., 24.8., 1.9.1917; UP 6.9.1917.

importance of achieving a non-socialist majority in the Diet also loomed large in Svinhufvud's thinking.[65]

Svinhufvud was joined in his move by another of the older generation of leading non-socialist political figures, Edvard Hjelt. Hjelt travelled to Stockholm at the end of August to survey the state of Finland's clandestine relations with Germany. The fate of the volunteer battalion in Germany had been an important cause of concern for pro-independence politicians since the March Revolution and one compounded by the volunteer movement's unreliable diplomatic contacts with Germany and the various internal disputes which afflicted the overall work of the Stockholm delegation.[66] With the international situation continuing uncertain and with no real indication of improved prospects to come, pro-independence politicians felt themselves in no position to allow any breakdown in communications with Berlin.

As the major movers behind the reform bill, the socialists had suffered a particularly unwelcome blow with the dissolution of the Diet. They had been unprepared for the Provisional Government's determination not to allow the bill to go through and disappointed by the failure of the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries to follow up their resolution in support of the Finnish move, and incensed by the rapidity with which the non-socialist parties had begun to prepare for the new elections following the Provisional Government's decision.

Kullervo Manner's decision as Speaker of the Diet to temporarily postpone further sittings of the old Diet following the announcement of the Russian decision reflected the socialists' initial expectation that this might only be a temporary setback. Although continuing to stress the illegality of the Provisional Government's decision, the socialists, however, were gradually forced to accept the fact, which their non-socialist opponents had already done, that new elections would be unavoidable. The socialists made no attempt to hide their bitterness at this development, describing the dissolution of the Diet as the joint work of a secret coalition between the Petrograd authorities and Finland's own conservative parties.[67]

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65. See Svinhufvud's speech on 19.8.1917, as reported in UP 22.8.1917.
66. Paasivirta II 1949, p. 104; Lappalainen 1977, p. 96.
67. Paasivirta II 1949, pp. 22—4; H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 233—4.

Manner recalled the old Diet on 29 August. Its some 140 members, forced to sit in the House of Estates after being prevented from entering their usual chamber by Russian troops, failed to win any significant political influence, eventually becoming little more than a discussion forum. The socialists came face to face with their isolated position and the problem of deciding on their future policy options when it became clear that both pro-independence and Agrarian Party members leant towards accepting the inevitability of the need for new elections. The following meeting of the Diet on 28 September, at which all non-socialist members stayed away, ended up as little more than a token demonstration of opposition to the holding of elections.[68]

Despite these setbacks, however, the socialists did not completely abandon their proposed reform bill ideas. They continued to sound out the possibilities of its being eventually approved, despite the obvious hostility to the plan of both the Provisional Government itself and the majority of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. It was not surprising therefore that contact began to be established between the Social Democrats and the Bolsheviks, who had previously proved most sympathetic to the Finnish cause and who had at around the same time achieved a dominant position in the influential Petrograd soviet, despite the significant differences that existed between the Finnish party's nationalist, Kautsky-style policies and the Bolsheviks' advocacy of and involvement in direct revolutionary action. This move appears to have taken place in late September through the person of Evert Huttunen, a socialist member of the Diet who had links with the executive committee of the Congress of Soviets.

Huttunen presented the leaders of the executive committee in Petrograd with a specimen agreement entitled 'A proposal for an agreement between Finland and Russia', which envisaged the Russian government's granting Finland complete internal independence while retaining responsibility for Finnish foreign affairs until the question of the country's international status was finally resolved.[69] It was also proposed that Russian military forces would be allowed to remain in Finland and that the Finnish

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68. Paasivirta II 1949, p. 44; Upton I 1980, p. 238.
69. *Työ* 9.10.1917.

authorities would refrain from pressing for the formation of a national army as long as hostilities in Europe continued. Both governments would be allowed some form of diplomatic representation in the other country's capital. In essence, the proposal aimed at what amounted to confirming, albeit late in the day, the Diet's approval of the reform bill on 18 July, and appears to have been predicated on the assumption that the socialists would acquire a majority in the new Diet.

The Finnish socialists, in addition to their determination to retain an active role in the Diet, were also concerned to maintain interest in the Finnish question among those attending the international socialist congress in Stockholm. This was in large part motivated by their fears that the All-Russian National Constituent Assembly, to be entrusted with resolving Russia's constitutional problems, would ultimately lean towards favouring imperial interests at the expense of those of minority national areas like Finland. The socialists, drawing on the lessons of recent history and in particular the experience of the post-1905 period, were also not slow to see that there was also every chance of events in Russia swinging sharply and unpredictably in favour of a conservative reaction.

6. Increasing unrest in Russia and Finland's shift to the Right

The parliamentary elections held at the beginning of October saw the combined non-socialist parties gain a clear majority (108—92), reversing the previous balance of power in the socialists' favour. It did little, however, to bridge the quite considerable gulf existing between pro-independence supporters within the non-socialist camp and their more traditionally conservative colleagues, which continued to remain as real as before. With the former still in the minority, the latter were able to gain control of the Senate, albeit a virtual rump Senate led by E. N. Setälä, and take over as Finland's provisional government, following the resignation of the socialist senators.

Internal developments in Russia continued to be closely followed in Finland after the Moscow congress and the failure of the Kornilov rebellion, but observers found it increasingly difficult

to get an overall grasp of the situation or the likely trend of future developments. General indications, as interpreted in Finland, seemed to point to the likelihood of radical political opinion gradually gaining ground and to the position of the Provisional Government becoming increasingly undermined. The increase in military action in the Baltic area also provoked increased political speculation. The German capture of Riga at the beginning of September, in particular, served to focus many minds on the changes in military fortunes which had taken place on the Eastern Front, and raised the question, voiced widely in the press, of how far and in what direction the Germans would be able to maintain their advance. Petrograd, in any case, seemed increasingly vulnerable.

Finnish views of the overall situation in the Baltic were also influenced, although to a lesser extent, by political developments in Sweden. The elections for the second chamber of the Swedish Parliament held in mid-September resulted in a clear victory for the liberals and social democrats, followed by the forming of a new coalition government of the victorious parties under Nils Edén in mid-October. Relatively little coverage of the Swedish elections or the subsequent change of government appeared in Finnish papers such as the moderate *Helsingin Sanomat* and the socialist *Työmies*.[70] *Uusi Suometar*, in contrast, in its more extensive commentaries, described the Swedish result as likely to signal a more distinct Swedish leaning towards the Entente powers and an increasingly reserved Swedish attitude towards Finnish moves towards independence.[71] Events in Sweden and, in particular, their possible repercussions on the German position, naturally proved of most interest to pro-independence opinion. Both *Svenska Tidningen* and *Uusi Päivä* described the forming of Edén's new government as likely to presage a greater Swedish willingness to accede to possible Western pressure.[72]

Two proposals outlining a possible future Finnish constitution and an agreement on future Finnish-Russian relations were published by a specially set-up constitutional committee on 3

70. HS 17.9., 17.10., 18.10., 21.10.1917; *Työmies* 17.9., 20.10.1917.
71. US 16.9., 18.10., 20.10.1917.
72. SvT 20.10.1917.

October, immediately following Finland's parliamentary elections. The work largely of Ståhlberg and Wrede, they represented the mainstream of opinion within the established non-socialist parties. While it was assumed in both proposals that Finland would remain, with the exception of some minor clarification of her autonomous position, a part of the Russian Empire, they nevertheless allowed for a significant expansion of Finland's own political institutions and the adoption of a presidency, the formation of a national army and the barring of the stationing of Russian troops in Finland during peacetime.[73]

The proposed republican form of government found some favour with members of the administration in Petrograd, who feared that a possible Finnish monarchy would inevitably adversely affect the course of Finnish politics. The Russian leadership, however, rejected out of hand the Finnish plan to allow Russian troops on Finnish soil only during wartime.[74] The overall Russian attitude towards the Finnish proposals, as it emerged during October, gave Finnish politicians little encouragement that any agreement with the Provisional Government over the country's position within the Empire would be possible in the short term.

The deepening schism between Left and Right afflicting social and political life in Finland was only further exacerbated by the October elections. The country's growing social problems continued to represent a bewildering and unexpected challenge to the non-socialist parties and, while there was no real attempt to ignore them or argue them away, no real movement was forthcoming on efforts to solve them either. The increasingly violent social unrest among the country's working class, together with the other widespread signs of social disaffection affecting the country, were often seen as the results of revolutionary agitation directed from Russia, rather than as the result of deeper dissatisfaction with the state of Finnish society.

The authoritarian tradition of government in Finland had never encouraged any deep-rooted popular attachment between the government and the people. A patriarchal *noblesse oblige*-coloured social order was taken for granted by the majority of

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73. See the committee proposals, numbers 6 and 7.
74. AU 20.10.1917; HS 24.10.1917, a news item based on material from *Rjetsh*.

conservative opinion. To many, there seemed to be only a choice between two options, maintaining the established status quo or opening the floodgates to revolution. Liberalism, which might have acted to counteract these outdated views, had had little real impact on the Finnish political scene and was unable therefore to provide the basis for any attempt at social and political compromise. Maintaining the government's hold on society remained the overriding concern of political opinion outside the Left.

On the Left, there was an increased sense of bitterness, accompanied by growing calls for revolutionary action. The Left's electoral defeat and the fact that the reform bill and the legislation on local government and the eight-hour working day passed by the previous Diet remained unratified were among the most prominent factors contributing to this mood. Their non-socialist opponents were not slow to criticise, and sometimes strongly and aggressively, this obvious failure of the socialists' legislative programme. The dissolution of the Tokoi-led socialist Senate and the subsequent electoral defeat served to force the labour movement, and the socialist press with *Työmies* at its head, into something of an ideological corner and into the adoption of a policy of accusation and open confrontation with the non-socialist parties. The growing food shortages in urban areas and the irregularity of cereal supplies provided ready material for increased criticism of the bourgeois authorities and in particular of Harald Åkerman, the senator in charge of food supplies and distribution.[75]

September and October saw Finnish society move significantly closer towards open social crisis with the setting up of Red militia units to counter the Civil Guard detachments which had sprung up in various parts of the country shortly previously. Workers were encouraged by their trade unions to join their local socialist militia units from 20 October onwards.[76] The labour movement's publication of a programme outlining socialist complaints, entitled 'Our demands', on 1 November only added to the increasing level of social tension. In essence, it amounted to a protest against the result of the recent elections and contained a

75. Rantatupa 1979, pp. 98—101.
76. Upton 1980, p. 252.

number of demands for the previous Diet's legislation on central and local government and the eight-hour working day to be made law, as well as a call for the disbanding of Civil Guard units, although not those of the Red militia.

Their failure at the October elections and the dissolution of the old Diet, typically blamed on what were described as secret dealings between Finnish and Russian reactionary circles, soon came to take on the nature of an almost psychological impasse for the socialists. The socialists' new programme included a novel proposal for calling a national assembly, effectively bypassing the newly-elected Diet, to be entrusted with resolving the country's constitutional problems. The socialists' proposals as a whole took the form of a series of ultimatums, issued on a virtually 'take it or leave it' basis to their non-socialist opponents. The appeal of direct revolutionary action as the only real alternative to ineffectual parliamentary activity was slowly but surely, however, beginning to grow among the rank and file of the labour movement.[77]

The increasing level of social unrest had also been coloured since the late summer of 1917 by the continued presence of Russian troops in Finland. The latters' revolutionary sympathies and involvement in Finnish domestic events saw phrases such as 'society at the mercy of the troops' become common headlines across the pages of *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Uusi Suometar* and many other non-socialist papers during the later summer and early autumn. These were often coupled with reports of Bolshevik-inspired agitators spreading unrest and uncertainty and repeated references to what was termed increasing 'fraternisation' between the Russian troops and the Finnish working class.[78] *Uusi Päivä* and *Svenska Tidningen*, both associated with the pro-independence movement, also frequently carried articles sharply criticising the threat to society posed by the continued presence of Russian troops and reporting cases of their intervention in Finnish affairs. In contrast to the more conservative press, however, the role of the Bolsheviks tended to be seen more in the context of their activities and role in the balance of power within, rather than outside

77. H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 241—2.
78. See the news coverage appearing in HS and US between 25.8—30.10.1917.

Russia.[79] The possible benefits to Finland and her chances of independence, if the internal power struggle in Russia were to continue and the Provisional Government possibly finally to crumble, also provided much cause for speculation in this section of the press.

The socialist standard-bearer *Työmies* also began to devote an increasing amount of space from the end of August onwards to the dangers inherent in the presence of Russian forces on Finnish soil and the growing number of cases of sabotage and violence.[80] The earlier participation of Russian troops in demonstrations outside the Diet during July in support of local government reform and the introduction of an eight-hour working day had particularly unsettled the socialist leaders, who were only too aware that their political opponents were ready and willing to use examples like this in their campaign to lay the blame for the disorder affecting the country firmly at the socialists' door. The socialist leadership, however, proved largely incapable of formulating any concrete policies of their own to regain control of a situation, which, as they only too well realised, was in fact rapidly slipping out of their hands.

The unsettled international situation in October 1917 also gave every appearance of containing the seeds for further unexpected developments. The German occupation of the Estonian island of Hiiumaa in the Baltic directly to the south of Finland in mid-October prompted *Helsingin Sanomat* to conclude that Finland would soon be faced with the strong possibility of an imminent German landing in the Åland Islands and along the southern Finnish coast, and Russia herself with German naval bombardment of Kronstadt and Petrograd.[81] Various sightings of the German airship 'Zeppelin' along the Finnish coast caused air-raid warnings and black-outs in Helsinki.[82] These indications of an increased German military presence in the Finnish area provoked a flood of rumours and swelled speculation about the possible course of international developments.

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79. See the news coverage and commentaries on the situation in Russia appearing in UP and SvT over the same period.
80. *Työmies* 22.8.—30.10.1917.
81. HS 21.10.1917.
82. SvT 17.19.1917; AU 18.10.1917.

Following the break in discussions caused by the furore over the reform bill, contact between the new Setälä-led Senate and the Provisional Government was re-established in meetings in Helsinki and Petrograd held to reconsider the prickly question of supreme authority in Finnish affairs. The sense of urgency felt by the Finnish negotiators led by J. K. Paasikivi not only reflected the issue's constitutional importance but also its practical implications for the coming budget and any tax changes it might include.[83] The discussions, however, proved slow and largely futile from the Finnish point of view as the Provisional Government, despite its increasingly threatened position, remained unwilling to make any concessions liable to encourage what it saw as Finland's 'separatist' aims.

The intensification of hostilities between Russia and Germany along the Eastern Front which had taken place from July onwards had raised hopes among Finnish activists abroad of the possibility of getting direct military support for the independence cause from Germany. Small activist groups within Finland had also begun to consider the likely chances of a successful popular uprising in a more favourable light. The volunteer movement saw no reason to doubt that Germany would be willing and able to extend military operations to Finnish territory if the circumstances required.[84] It does not appear, however, that the German High Command had any plans for action in Finland, at least during August, when it was concentrating army planning and resources on the imminent German offensive in the Riga area. The German military command appears to have come to the conclusion, on the basis of its sources in Stockholm, that the preparations for an uprising in Finland, put in hand by the volunteer movement under Colonel Mexmontan and his fellow activists operating from the Swedish capital, were unrealistic and for the major part ill-planned. It seemed to German eyes even possible, given the movement's shaky lines of communication, that the planned uprising might begin almost spontaneously, without any final decision on the part of the movement's leaders, and thereby be condemned to virtually certain failure.

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83. HS 21.10.1917.
84. Lappalainen 1977, pp. 95—6; Upton I 1980, pp. 157—61.

Anxieties within the High Command caused General Ludendorff to re-outline the German position on the Finnish question to the volunteer movement on 21 August and to stress that Germany would only be willing in the immediate future to send small-scale arms shipments to Finland to consolidate anti-Russian opinion. A shipment of some 6,500 German rifles from Danzig was in fact unloaded at the end of October near Kokkola.[85] The German High Command also proposed that the activists operating within Finland should send a representative to Stockholm to coordinate communications with Germany, a move amounting to a virtual vote of no-confidence in the emigré leadership in Stockholm and reflecting Germany's particular dissatisfaction with the activities of the military planning committee led by Colonel Mexmontan. Edvard Hjelt arrived in Stockholm, in response to the German request, at the end of August and was shortly afterwards given a free hand by Svinhufvud and his allies at the beginning of September, in a move typical of the period, to make any agreements on Finland's behalf with the German authorities which the situation demanded, without prior reference to the government in Helsinki.[86]

85. For details on the German arms shipments, see v. Gagern III 1964, pp. 335—7.
86. Hülsen 1921, p. 239; Paasivirta II 1949, pp. 103—5; Lappalainen 1977, p. 96.

III The October Revolution and the Finnish Declaration of Independence

1. Revolutionary Petrograd

In hiding in Finland from July 1917 onwards, Lenin came to the conclusion during the autumn that a successful armed coup d'état in Petrograd was within the reach of the Bolsheviks and his adoption of the demand 'All power to the Soviets' typified his drive to present a clear challenge to the authority of the Provisional Government. At Lenin's initiative, the Bolshevik Central Committee decided to begin preparations for an uprising timed to take place, after some changes to the original plan, on 25 October. The detailed preparations of the operation were handled by a special military committee in which Leo Trotsky, who had joined the party the same summer, played a leading part. The uprising was timed to coincide with the meeting in Petrograd of the second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, now with a Bolshevik majority. The plan for the uprising revolved around the capture by workers' militia of a number of strategically important sites in Petrograd, including the Winter Palace which had been used by the Provisional Government for its meetings.

The success of the storming of the Winter Palace led to the capture of a number of government ministers, with the exception of Kerensky, who managed to escape abroad.[1] The Provisional

1. Carr I 1950, pp. 98—108, v. Rauch 1968, p. 22; A Short History of the USSR 1965, pp. 35—45.

Government was replaced by the Congress of Soviets in the wake of the Bolshevik uprising with a new administrative organ, the Council of People's Commissars, under the leadership of Lenin, which was entrusted with governmental powers until such time as a national constituent assembly met to resolve the nature of the country's future constitution. One of the new government's first moves included an appeal to all those involved in the war in Europe to begin immediate negotiations to achieve what was described as a 'just and democratic peace without annexation or indemnities'. All Russia's treaties of alliance with the Western powers were effectively declared null and void and all responsibility for debts incurred by the Provisional Government and Tsarist authorities summarily disclaimed.[2] The authority of the Council of People's Commissars in the period immediately following the revolution, however, extended to only a few major cities in addition to Petrograd and, at least initially, it could only call on workers' militia numbering a few thousand men at most, together with a few Latvian revolutionary battalions. The situation was further complicated by the refusal of the majority of the Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks at the Congress of Soviets to support the new government, and their subsequent joint walk-out at the assembly. The Council appealed directly to the working class throughout Europe and the world for support, describing itself as representing the first stage in a series of future national and international revolutions.[3]

2. Supreme power in the hands of a regency or the Diet?

As well as signalling a radical change of direction in Russia's own internal development, the October Revolution also inevitably had a major and immediate impact on Finnish-Russian relations. Initial Finnish reactions to the events of the October Revolution differed markedly from those inspired by the earlier March

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2. Carr II 1952, pp. 138—9; Carr III 1953, pp. 9—30; A Short History of the USSR 1965, pp 38, 50—6.
3. Carr I 1950, pp. 162—77; A Short History of the USSR 1965, p. 46.

Revolution, with opinion sharply divided between Right and Left. The general consensus over the fact that Finland's own position would inevitably and perhaps significantly be affected by developments in Russia could not hide the wide disagreement which emerged over how this would make itself felt and to what extent the shift in power would be favourable for Finland. Argument was heated over whether Finland's position had in fact been improved by the fall of the Provisional Government and to what extent Russia's territorial integrity had been weakened, and how the new Council of People's Commissars would react to Finland's status within the Empire and Finnish moves towards independence. There was also wide concern about what the Bolshevik seizure of power would mean ideologically and socially, and whether it would give added impetus to social revolution outside Russia, and in Finland in particular. The Left was keen to know whether the events in Petrograd would inspire workers in Finland to follow the Russian example of revolutionary action. The Right too was concerned whether Finland's close proximity to Petrograd would see the country rapidly succumb to revolution. No one felt sure, on the other hand, whether the Bolsheviks represented a passing phenomenon or whether they were in power to stay. Political opinion in Finland during November 1917 was in virtual disarray.

Soon after the first news of the revolution in Petrograd reached Finland a number of non-socialist politicians proposed the establishment of a special regency to act as the supreme political and constitutional authority in Finland and to put an end to the state of constitutional limbo, with its constant shifting of authority from one set of provisional authorities in Russia to another, which had afflicted Finland ever since the fall of the autocracy. Article 38 of the Gustavian Act of Government of 1772 covering eventualities 'in the event of the king's death' was invoked as the constitutional basis for the setting-up of a special three-man regency committee, a somewhat belated recourse to the 1772 Act some eight months after the fall of the Tsar.[4] The move reflected an obvious desire by the established non-socialist parties to adopt a more active and independent style of policy in contrast to their

4. Paasivirta II 1949, pp. 134—5; Polvinen I 1967, p. 124; Lappalainen 1977, p. 73.

previous one of cooperation with the Provisional authorities in Petrograd. A temporary regency would allow, it was supposed, in line with traditional conservative political thinking, the established division of power within society to be maintained and restrict the pace of change to constitutionally manageable proportions.[5]

The labour movement, in contrast, responded to the developments in Petrograd by demanding the immediate approval of the 'Our Demands' programme by the Diet and with it the final ratification of the reform bill and the legislation on the restructuring of local government and the introduction of the eight-hour working day.[6] A clear demonstration of the increasingly radical nature of opinion among the working class was given by a week-long general strike which began on 18 November. Marked by a number of violent clashes, it only served to deepen the hostility of non-socialist opinion towards the labour movement and its intentions.

Taken together, these developments marked an unprecedented heightening of political and social tension within Finnish society, bringing the prospect of the transformation of radical social unrest into revolutionary action and the destruction of any semblance of national unity yet closer. Socialist opinion had by now become increasingly and openly revolutionary, the activities of the Red Guards increasingly uncontrolled and violent. The socialist leaders, lacking any coherent and comprehensive pattern of policies to counter this development, were in no real position to halt the tide of events.[7] The killing of some 25 non-socialist figures by the Red Guards during the General Strike had the effect of sending a shock wave through conservative opinion and contributed to further distorting the picture common on the Right of the Left as advocating and instigating untrammelled violent action, and gave added impetus to the expansion of the Civil Guard.[8]

Social unrest at home, together with the Bolshevik take-over in Petrograd, served to cause a strong swing towards a more

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5. Paasivirta II 1949, pp. 129, 136.
6. Ibid., p. 128; Kirby 1979, pp. 47—8; Polvinen I 1967, pp. 120—1.
7. H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 244—6; Upton I 1980, pp. 2811—7.
8. J. Paavolainen I 1966, p. 76; Upton I 1980, p. 340; Hersalo I 1966, pp. 155—6.

unambiguously pro-independence stance among the non-socialist parties. This change, which had begun earlier in the autumn among the ranks of the established conservative parties, soon embraced virtually the whole of non-socialist opinion. Constitutionalist politicians previously identified with a conciliatory and cautious approach to the Russian authorities and loyalty towards the Empire, faced with an increasingly critical domestic social situation, found themselves arguing for a break with Russia as the only practical solution. Finland had to be insulated at all costs from the 'anarchy' that was Russia. The fear of a revolution in Finland, triggered by the example of events in Petrograd, provoked the adoption by the traditional political élite in Finland of a radical policy aimed at securing national independence. Only independence seemed to offer the means to defend society against those intent on its destruction or radical transformation and preserve the established political power and social position of conservative political opinion.

This shift in non-socialist opinion effectively served to bridge the gulf which had developed through the spring and summer between the younger pro-independence generation and their more conservative elders. Pro-independence politicians, who for long had been in the minority, despite a slight increase in their numbers in August and September, found themselves in November with a significantly expanded level of political influence. From being a small, if vocal minority, the group now emerged as the new leadership of non-socialist opinion. The October Revolution and the General Strike in Finland also indirectly caused pro-German sentiment to spread to include a much wider spectrum of bourgeois opinion than previously, when it had been largely restricted to the volunteer movement. Germany was now seen as Finland's best ally against the Russian threat and that of internal social revolution.

Attitudes within the labour movement during November moved in completely the opposite direction to those current among their non-socialist opponents. The loss of a socialist majority in the Diet had had the effect of bringing the prospect of the movement losing all effective political influence that much closer. The movement's self-assurance, deriving from its strength among the working class, its past election success and the strong left-wing press, had suffered a blow which seemed to have every likelihood of

provoking open rebellion among its members. Increasing unemployment and inadequate food supplies, together with the onset of winter, only increased the level of discontent at the movement's grass roots level.

There was much admiration in the labour movement for the Russian masses and their instrumental role in achieving significant changes in the Russian political system, an admiration which became associated in the movement's own collective memory with the sense of power which had been felt during the 1905 General Strike in Finland. Less the result of ideological factors, this admiration largely represented a general enthusiasm for revolutionary action and what it could apparently achieve compared to the slow progress of constitutional reform. Mass action, however, tended all the same to be seen as simply a tool to pressure for radical social reform and as a means to seize power, rather than as the stuff of revolution or the key to changing the very basis of the social structure.[9]

The attitude of the labour movement towards Finland's position and possible future subsequent to the October Revolution differed significantly from its early position towards Finnish-Russian relations. The replacement of the disliked Provisional Government by a Bolshevik-dominated administration, one likely on the basis of past evidence to be appreciably more favourable towards granting Finland her independence than one controlled by the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, made the movement adopt a conciliatory approach to the new authorities. While the non-socialist parties had generally moved towards increased advocacy of a non-negotiated independence, the socialist leaders aligned themselves behind a negotiated settlement, believing that it offered a real possibility of a satisfactory settlement of the independence question. Some doubts continued to linger nevertheless among the socialists about the ability of the Bolsheviks to retain their grip on power in Russia.

The proposal by the non-socialists in the Diet on 8 November for the setting-up of a special regency committee provoked some sharp debate between the various parliamentary parties over the whole question of what would be involved in the transfer of supreme

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9. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 59—61; Upton I 1980, pp. 300—1.

authority to Finland's own political institutions and the consequent redistribution of political and social power within the country. The main focus of argument centred around the possible maintenance of the established division of executive and governmental power and the possibility of a significant increase in the power of the Diet. The problems brought up by the discussion of the reform bill in the summer also raised their heads again. The regency proposal, aimed as it was at retaining the established powerbase, was quickly labelled by the socialists as an attempt to ensure the continuance of the country's traditional autocratic style of government. The socialists continued as a result to argue for adoption of their earlier reform bill, despite the fact that its proposed transfer of power on only domestic issues had been largely bypassed by recent developments.

The attitude of the Agrarian Party came to be decisive. In a proposal put before the Diet on 15 November, Santeri Alkio suggested that supreme power in its entirety be transferred to the Diet, thereby giving Finland control of her own affairs and at the same time rebalancing the power structure within government in an effort to calm the country's largely unchecked social unrest, symbolised by the General Strike, which had just then begun. Alkio's proposal was accepted the same day by a large Diet majority of 127-68, made up of Agrarian members, pro-independence non-socialists and the Social Democrats. In line with the aim of calming popular discontent, this move was followed by the rapid approval of the local government and shortened working day legislation which had been the subject of inter-party dispute since July.

The Diet's decision on 15 November to independently reorganise Finland's government structure, which excluded any reference to Russian involvement in foreign or military affairs, clearly signalled Finland's long-term commitment to shedding her political and constitutional ties with Russia.[10] The chaotic nature of the domestic situation, however, meant that despite the gravity of the decision, political and public attention remained very much firmly focused on the more immediate issue of the General Strike.

Developments in the political arena were paralleled and

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10. Paasivirta II 1949, pp. 143—7.

influenced by the sharp downturn in Finland's economic involvement in the Russian market which had taken place by the autumn of 1917. The possibility of Finland's using her rouble surplus to purchase forest land and sawmills across the border in East Karelia had been argued as late as May, reflecting the general feeling of the time that the future would not bring any significant changes in Finland's status within the Empire.[11] By the summer, however, Finnish business opinion had begun to take a much more pessimistic view of the future continuity of Finnish-Russian economic relations and of the profit to be made from them.[12] This shift in views and the country's economic focus signalled the breaking of an important link tying the Finnish economy to Russia, and complemented and underwrote the political developments taking place pointing Finland's course towards independence. A large question mark nevertheless remained over the shape of Finland's future foreign trade links. Hopes were mainly centred on re-establishing a reasonable measure of trade with Sweden and the rest of Scandinavia, an official trade representative being sent to Stockholm in October to sound out the prospects for reopening trade ties.[13]

The ending of the General Strike in the wake of the reforms voted through by the Diet failed to bring any real reduction in the level of social tension. The strike had a powerful impact on political opinion and reinforced and deepened political hostilities, both within the political parties and in society as a whole. This growth of mutual suspicion served to undermine and weaken the chances of establishing any significant degree of national unity, and virtually ruled out the possibility of forming a coalition government drawing on representatives from all the political parties, similar to that set up after the March Revolution. The swing towards more traditional policies among the non-socialist parties which took place in direct response to the events of November was also reflected among pro-independence supporters, who, under Svinhufvud, adopted a strong anti-socialist position, and within the Agrarian Party. The strength of this shift in non-

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11. *Kauppalehti* 16.5.1917; Hoving I 1947, p. 308.
12. *Kauppalehti* 9.8., 5.9.1917; *Mercator* 31.8.1917.
13. *Kauppalehti* 23.11., 28.11.1917; Paasivirta 1968, p. 38.

socialist opinion was decisive when the Diet came to vote on the choice of a new government programme and administration on 26 November, when Svinhufvud was chosen to head a non-socialist cabinet in favour of the socialist alternative proposal, which would have made Oskari Tokoi Prime Minister.[14]

3. Svinhufvud and the declaration of independence

Following the revolution in Petrograd, the socialists had initially hoped that the new Bolshevik government would issue a manifesto on its position towards Finland similar to that issued by the Provisional authorities earlier in the year in March, thereby providing a framework for future bilateral relations.[15] This, however, would have meant the Finnish authorities indirectly recognising the Bolshevik government, which the non-socialist parties were unwilling to do, and the socialists in any case had their own doubts about the Bolsheviks' chances of maintaining their hold on governmental authority. Political initiative on the independence question shifted from the socialists to their opponents, however, when the new government under Svinhufvud took office. Svinhufvud was particularly keen for the non-socialist parties to grasp the independence challenge, one which he saw as closely linked to Germany. Back at the beginning of September, although then admittedly in a purely private capacity as a supporter of the volunteer movement, he had argued for maintaining secret contacts with Germany. Both he and Hjelt regarded the German military presence in North-East Europe as of central importance to Finland's position and overall security and the general pattern of developments in the Baltic region.

Svinhufvud pressed for the issuing of an additional statement on Finnish sovereignty, this time directed to the wider international community, to complement the Diet vote taken on 15 November. Svinhufvud was undoubtedly only further convinced of the need

14. Paasivirta II 1949, pp. 161—3; Polvinen I 1967, pp. 160—1; Upton I 1980, pp. 339—41.
15. Paasivirta II 1949, p. 175.

to publicly isolate Finland from her earlier ties to Russia after hearing of the discussions which had been held under General Ludendorff at German Headquarters on 26 November through Hjelt, who had been present as a representative of the volunteer movement, regarding a possible armistice between Germany and the Soviet Russian government.[16] Svinhufvud's decision to call a meeting of the leaders of the non-socialist parties on 29 November marked a further step towards his aim of announcing a separate declaration of Finnish independence. Opinion within the non-socialist camp on the issue, however, was split, with Wrede, Kairamo, Ingman and Ståhlberg favouring a cautious approach and only Alkio siding with Svinhufvud, while at the same time calling for involving the socialists in any decision on the issue. Svinhufvud's success in converting the cautious majority to his bolder policy and his refusal to countenance discussions with the socialists reflected the weight of influence Svinhufvud carried in non-socialist opinion and also that of the pro-independence politicians allied with him, as well as the increasing influence of pro-German sentiment.[17]

Caution and a desire to avoid any unnecessary histrionics characterised official moves on the independence question. Svinhufvud was keen to keep control of developments solely in governmental hands. The government's proposal for a new constitution put before the Diet on 4 December made the government's view clear that de facto independence had already in fact been achieved. In his speech accompanying the bill's publication, Svinhufvud declared that the Diet's decision on 15 November making itself the country's supreme authority meant that, as he put it, 'The Finnish people have recognised their right and their duty and taken their fate into their own hands, in the awareness that the country cannot realise her national and cultural potential in any other condition than one of complete freedom. Our longing for freedom, which has gone unanswered for so long, must now be satisfied. The Finnish people must be allowed to stand beside the other peoples of the world as an independent nation ... We do not believe that the free people of Russia or the

16. Ibid., pp. 179—83; Lappalainen 1977, p. 88.
17. Alkio: Päiväkirja 29.11.1917; E. W. Juva II 1961, pp. 77—80; Lappalainen 1977, pp. 82—3.

Russian constituent assembly will want to stand in the way of Finland's wish to join the ranks of the free and independent nations of the world ...'

The government wanted the Diet in particular to agree to a public announcement of the fact of Finland's complete independence. Discussions were put in hand between the government and the various non-socialist parliamentary parties on the issue, but no attempt was made to include any socialist representatives. Angry at being excluded from these talks and being forced to take what amounted to a side seat on the whole issue, despite the Diet decision of 15 November giving the assembly supreme authority on constitutional issues, the socialists decided to propose an initiative of their own.[18] This contained, in line with the party's general argument for cooperation with the Bolshevik authorities which had been advocated since November, the proviso that the question of a final declaration of independence should be fully discussed with the Russian authorities and a special Diet committee be set up to coordinate negotiations with Petrograd.[19]

The Diet thus found itself eventually faced with two separate and competing proposals for a declaration of independence, one socialist and one non-socialist, sharing a similar general content, but worded and argued differently. The simple mathematics of the balance of power within the government necessarily meant that it was the latter of the two, presented by Svinhufvud two days earlier, which was finally approved on 6 December by a majority of 100—88 as the official declaration of Finnish independence.

4. The problem of foreign recognition of independence

Following the declaration of independence, the government was immediately faced with the problem of acquiring foreign recognition for its move. Every effort was made to avoid concentrating this diplomatic effort on any single country or group of countries. The requests for recognition of Finnish inde-

18. Paasivirta II 1949, p. 189; Lappalainen 1977, p. 86; H. Soikkanen 1975, p. 252; Upton I 1980, p. 347.
19. Paasivirta II 1949, pp. 190—1; Polvinen I 1967, pp. 166—7; Kirby 1979 p. 48.

pendence sent to the German, British, French and American governments were all essentially similar and almost word for word the same as those addressed to the Swedish authorities and those of the other neutral Scandinavian countries. All the requests, regardless of their destination, were forwarded through each country's consular representative in Helsinki or their legations in Petrograd. The government's caution was also reflected in its decision not to use the services of the activist leader Edvard Hjelt in its communications with Berlin and to request Sweden to pass on the Finnish note.[20] These initial notes were followed by the dispatch of separate delegations to each of the countries in question to present a more formal request for recognition.

This cautious diplomacy was dictated by the government's awareness of the tenseness of the international political situation. However much Svinhufvud and other members of his government felt especially sympathetic towards Germany, they were in no position to ignore the West's obvious potential influence on the issue. With Finland's trading relations with Russia deadlocked and the country suffering food and other shortages, the importance of reopening commercial links with the West, moreover, could similarly not be underrated. In sharp contrast to its attitude towards the European powers, however, the Svinhufvud government made no initial attempt to establish diplomatic contact with Russia. Following the departure of Carl Enckell, the Finnish administration's official representative, from Petrograd in the wake of the October Revolution and his return to Helsinki, Finland in fact had lacked any high-ranking representative in the Russian capital. The government wished to avoid any commitment to, or recognition of, the Bolshevik government until the situation in Petrograd showed some signs of becoming less confused.[21]

The government had high hopes of receiving a rapid response to its diplomatic initiative in the West. The government's emphasis on the country's future neutrality would, it was also hoped, act to trigger progress on the difficult question of the evacuation of the Russian forces remaining on Finnish territory. A neutral and

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20. Paasivirta 1957, p. 23.
21. Ibid., pp. 26—7; Lappalainen 1977, p. 87.

independent Finland was similarly also seen by the government as likely to be in German interests at a time when the German and Soviet governments had begun armistice negotiations. Fairly rapid Western recognition of Finnish independence would serve both to improve Finland's overall position and to persuade the Russian authorities to accept the fact of Finland's new status.

No rapid positive reaction from the West of the type imagined by the Finnish authorities, however, proved forthcoming or in prospect on the basis of the information the government received from various sources from mid-December onwards. This finally persuaded the government of the need to establish some contact with Russia. The Diet decided on 22 December to appeal directly to the All-Russian National Constituent Assembly, due to meet in the near future, and request recognition of Finland's declaration of independence.[22]

5. Events in Finland in 1917 as seen from abroad

The March Revolution and the formation of the Provisional Government in Petrograd had been greeted with some satisfaction, and in some cases modest enthusiasm, by the Western powers. Hopes that the change in government would bring an improvement in Russia's military capability were also mixed with a sense of relief that the autocratic régime had been replaced by a more acceptable and Western-style liberal Russia. British and French interest was virtually solely focused on the questions of the impact of Russia's upheavals on the progress of the war, to the exclusion of any real concern at the other possible implications of the change of government in Russia, including its potential effect on the status and future of non-Russian nationalities within the Russian Empire. The British and French governments, in fact, lacked any clear policy on this latter issue and, by implication, no real policy on their attitude towards Finland, beyond a very general hope that the Russian authorities would avoid unnecessarily pressuring

22. Paasivirta 1957, p. 29; Polvinen I 1967, p. 168.

minority groups. The limited nature of Western interest with regard to Finland was well reflected in Balfour's reply, in his capacity as British Foreign Secretary, to a parliamentary question put to the government in the House of Commons at the beginning of April concerning the Finnish position, in which he described Finnish opinion as being completely satisfied with the March Manifesto issued by the Provisional authorities.[23]

French press interest in the non-Russian nationality question was mainly restricted to Poland, as part of the legacy of French interest in Poland dating from the various Polish rebellions of the nineteenth century. A fair degree of editorial and news coverage during the spring of 1917 was devoted to the promises of freedom given to the Polish population by the Provisional Government and to the fate of the Posen and Silesian Poles under German occupation, who it was hoped would be removed from the German sphere of influence in the peace negotiations at the end of the war. French press comment on Finland subsequent to the March Manifesto, which was largely based on Russian sources, in line with France's close ties to Russia, was restricted to items on the issuing of the March Manifesto, the forming of the new government under Tokoi and the recall of the Diet.[24] Finland was generally described, in much the same terms as used by Balfour in his parliamentary answer, as a loyal part of the Russian Empire and as satisfied with her degree of autonomy. The Finnish proposal for a major transfer of governmental authority put forward in the summer, coinciding as it did with the major Russian offensive against the Germans in the central part of the Eastern Front, evoked some criticism from the major French papers, which described it as an ill-timed display of lack of loyalty towards the authorities in Petrograd.[25]

Finland was also the subject of some attention by the major British papers in the wake of the March Revolution and the interest

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23. See Balfour's statement to the House of Commons on 2.4.1917 (Parliamentary Dabates. House of Commons 1917 Vol. 92, p. 884).
24. On the Polish question, see *Journal des Débats* 26.3., 1.4., 15.4.1917; *Le Figaro* 2.4.1917; *Le Temps* 20.3., 1.4.1917. For Finland, see *Journal des Débats* 22.3., 30.3.1917; *Le Figaro* 26.3.1917; *Le Temps* 21.3., 30.3.1917.
25. *Journal des Débats* 30.7., 4.8.1917; *Le Figaro* 5.8.1917; *Le Temps* 15.7., 23.7., 30.7.1917.

and enthusiasm generated by the emergence of the new liberal régime in Russia. This was in large part a mere continuation of the positive coverage of Finnish affairs which had been established since 1899, when the British press had first expressed its sympathy with the Finnish struggle against Russian attempts to restrict the country's autonomy.[26] No comparable interest in Poland or the Polish cause to that shown by the French press surfaced in its British counterpart. Despite the very restricted nature and amount of news about Finland published in Britain, the British press nevertheless devoted more space to Finnish issues than to those of any other non-Russian nationality along Russia's western border. As a naval power, British concerns embraced the Baltic area as a whole. The re-recognition of Finnish autonomy by the Provisional authorities in the spring of 1917 was therefore seen as a positive development in indirectly acting to reduce the influence of pro-German opinion in Sweden.[27] Although the British press wrote openly and positively about the country's autonomous status, Finnish political moves towards total independence, including the initially abortive reform bill, were significantly less favourably looked upon, largely as a result of a general desire to avoid endangering Russia's alliance with the West. Pro-independence moves tended, in fact, to be seen as linked to the growing expansion of the German sphere of influence in North-West Europe.[28]

Following the October Revolution and the setting-up of the Bolshevik administration, it soon became clear to observers in France that the new Soviet government had no intention of maintaining Russia's alliance with the West. The nascent sense of betrayal that this engendered was only intensified when the news that the Bolsheviks were planning to start armistice negotiations with Germany filtered through to Paris. This latter move was interpreted as only likely to strengthen the hand of France's main enemy. French reaction took the form of a statement on the future direction of French foreign policy by the newly-elected Prime Minister, Clémenceau, issued on 25 November, announcing

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26. Paasivirta 1978, pp. 335—6.
27. *The Times* 20.3., 23.3., 26.3.1917; *Manchester Guardian* 19.3., 24.3., 28.3.1917.
28. *The Times* 16.7., 29.8., 17.10.1917; *Manchester Guardian* 26.5., 16.7., 18.7.1917.

France's intention to have no official links with the new Russian government.

While Clémenceau's government necessarily concentrated its main efforts on attempts to restore French morale and improve the national war-effort and thereby push back the German army on the Western Front, some moves were put in hand to evolve a new French policy for Eastern Europe, taking account of the loss of Russia as an ally, and sympathetic towards the separatist ambitions of the non-Russian nationalities within the Russian Empire. Rather than reflecting a sudden favourable shift in French sympathies towards these nationalities, this development pointed to an attempt to exploit these areas in line with France's overall policy of creating a defensive zone in Eeastern Europe against Germany. For its success, the French plan depended on involving Poland and the Ukraine. Contact was established with the Polish group led by Roman Dmovski, opposed to Josef Pilsudsky's Polish volunteer units operating in Austrian Galitsia. French intentions were made clear in the announcement made to the National Assembly by the French Foreign Minister, Pichon, on 27 December to the effect that France's long-term political aim was for 'an independent and undivided Polish state'.[29] France also worked towards encouraging the formation of a national army in the Ukraine to act as a buffer against Germany and at the same time protect France's important economic investments in the area.[30]

Finland also featured in the new Eastern European policy outlined by the French government. Although Clémenceau remained mainly interested in Central and Southern Europe, Pichon appears to have been keen to include Finland in the new anti-German defensive zone France planned for Eastern Europe. While aware of the pro-German sympathies of some sections of Finnish opinion, Pichon was convinced that anti-Bolshevik feelings were strong in Finland. French support for Finnish independence would in any case, Pichon assumed, weaken the influence of this pro-German opinion. Pichon's favourable attitude towards Finland was further reflected in a French Foreign

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29. See Pichon's statement made on 27.11.1917 (Annales de la Chambre des Députés. Debats parlamentaires 1917 III, p. 3795).
30. Kosyk 1981, pp. 141—4.

Ministry memorandum of 8 December prepared immediately after the Finnish declaration of independence. Pichon also brought the Finnish question up for discussion at the high-level Allied talks held at Versailles on 23 December. Despite the agreement reached between the British and French leaders at this meeting on spheres of influence in southern Russia, the British proved unwilling to follow the French argument on the need for a positive attitude to Finnish independence. Despite British reluctance, however, the French government remained unswayed in its desire to recognise Finnish independence as and when circumstances allowed, and preferably before Germany did so.[31]

Britain's foreign policy-makers were mainly concerned with avoiding any sudden changes in British relations with Russia. Contact was maintained with those circles of Russian political opinion which had been favourably disposed towards Russia's alliance with the West. The Foreign Office considered the All-Russian National Constituent Assembly as all-important in shaping the future of Russia. While relatively little importance was attached to the Soviet government's long-term role in determining Russia's future, it was generally thought unwise in London to attempt to isolate discussion of the Finnish question from its wider Russian context. The British government, despite its obviously cooler approach to Finnish affairs compared to its French counterpart, was keen nevertheless to make some friendly gesture towards the Finnish administration and offered its help in organising food supplies from the West. The British authorities appear to have assumed that Germany would not make any rapid decision on the question of recognising Finland's declaration of independence and particularly not before the conclusion of the German-Russian negotiations at Brest-Litovsk. The Foreign Office also remained doubtful that the Soviet government would be willing to recognise Finnish independence.[32]

German foreign policy thinking on Eastern Europe in the period

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31. K. Hovi 1975, pp. 71—82, 93—7. Also see General Niessel's report to the French War Ministry dated 7.12.1917 (SHAF 6 N 24). For press coverage, see *Le Temps* 11.11., 12.12.1917; *Le Matin* 10.12.1917.
32. Lyytinen 1980, p. 79, 81. See also Balfour's statement in the House of Commons made on 15.1.1918 (Parliamentary Debates. House of Commons 1918 Vol. 101, p. 137).

following the March Revolution was dominated by the question of negotiating a separate peace agreement with Russia which would allow Germany to concentrate her military effort on the struggle along the Western Front. The German leadership outlined an overall policy for the area at the end of April 1917, which included the setting-up of a Polish monarchy under German protection, as had been promised in the autumn of the previous year, and the creation of independent administrations in Lithuania and Courland. Bringing Livonia and Estonia within the German sphere of influence was also proposed.[33] Finland, however, continued to remain outside German plans at this stage.

The future of the Finnish volunteer battalion, which had served on the Eastern Front near Riga before being moved to Libau in March 1917, remained unclear and gave every appearance of becoming even less clear as the prospect of a separate peace between Germany and Russia, in which Finland would remain part of the Russian Empire, came closer. Such a development would effectively prevent the volunteers from returning to Finland. Various solutions to the problem were considered by the German authorities in 1917, including settling the volunteers on demobilisation on farms in East Prussia.[34]

Political developments in Finland in the wake of the March Revolution, and particularly the reinstatement of Finland's autonomy, received favourable coverage in the German press. Adequate and up to date information on Finnish affairs was difficult to come by for German journalists, however, because of the war, and what was available mainly came through Stockholm.[35] The German press' major focus of interest in its coverage of Russia's western border areas indisputably lay with Poland, whose loyalties had been the subject of sharp German-Russian competition since the outbreak of the war, with both countries vying with each other in their promises of future reforms and freedoms. Germany's general interest in Russia's minority nationalities, heightened by the imminent prospect of far-reaching changes in Eastern Europe, naturally extended to Finland. This

33. Ritter III 1964, pp. 482, 506—9.
34. Hubatsch 1956, pp. 100—5.
35. *Frankfurter Zeitung* 19.3., 21.3., 22.3.1917; *Berliner Tageblatt* 22.3.1917.

provided Finnish activists with the opportunity of occasionally getting articles published in the German press. From the late spring of 1917 onwards, these argued more or less directly for the gaining of Finnish independence.[36]

The scope of German coverage of Finnish politics grew considerably during the summer of 1917 at the time of the furore over the reform bill. While German commentators generally sympathised with Finland's desire to extend the limits of her autonomy following earlier Russian attempts to restrict Finnish political freedoms, they were nevertheless somewhat pessimistic about Finland's future against the background of Russia's clear intention of maintaining her strategic position in the northern Baltic. Finland, in fact, was often compared with the Ukraine as an example of 'separatist sentiment' within the Russian Empire.[37]

With the resurgence of German military activity along the Eastern Front in the autumn and the German capture of Riga, Finland gradually came to assume greater significance in the eyes of the German High Command, a fact reflected in the secret arms shipments sanctioned for dispatch to the Finnish volunteer movement. This also contributed to a re-evaluation of the value of the Finnish volunteer battalion and resulted in small groups being selected from within its ranks and sent secretly to Finland to carry out military intelligence-gathering and sabotage operations.[38]

Despite the German army's positive attitude, communicated to the Finnish government at the end of November, towards a possible declaration of independence, the overriding importance of the armistice negotiations begun a little later at Brest-Litovsk with the Soviet government was such that the German authorities proved unwilling to countenance endangering the progress of these talks by pressing the Bolsheviks over granting independence to Finland. When the two sides agreed to a month-long cease-fire on 15 December it was therefore no surprise that the agreement made no mention of Finnish independence or the evacuation of Russian troops from Finnish territory. The German authorities

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36. See Samuli Sario's article 'Zur Lage in Finnland' in Deutsche Politik (29.7.1917) and Herman Gummerus' 'Finnlands Kampf für die Unabhängigkeit' in Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung (30.6.1917).
37. *Frankfurter Zeitung* 21.7.1917; *Berliner Tageblatt* 21.7.1917.
38. Lauerma 1966, pp. 777—9.

tried instead to persuade the Finnish government to start direct negotiations of its own with the Soviet leaders, following the German example.[39]

The March Revolution was also extensively covered in the Swedish press. While the restoration of Finnish autonomy which took place in its wake was universally seen as an important development from Sweden's own point of view, opinions among the various political parties were widely divergent about Finland's political prospects and overall future. A general upswing in Swedish interest in Finnish affairs during the spring of 1917, however, was apparent across the whole political spectrum.

Dagens Nyheter and *Social-Demokraten*, despite or rather because of their political sympathies with the Entente powers, had always found Russia's pre-revolutionary restrictive policies in Finland difficult to accept. The March Revolution appeared to remove this problem and was seen at the same time as bringing the Western powers and Russia closer together to form a more integrated alliance.[40] The moderate right of centre *Svenska Dagbladet*, which had been closely associated with Hammarskjöld's government and supported Swartz's government which had replaced it in the spring of 1917, saw post-revolutionary developments in Finland as likely to ease the pressure on Sweden's international position. Finland and Russia were described as now having the opportunity to establish their bilateral relations on a sound footing based on cooperation and mutual respect. In the longer term, it was hoped that some kind of international guarantee establishing Finland's special position might be forthcoming from the peace conference likely to take place at the end of the war, or some other comparable international meeting.[41]

Aftonbladet, Nya Dagligt Allehanda and *Stockholms Dagblad* all expressed dissatisfaction with the progress of events in Finland, despite the positive developments that had taken place subsequent to the Revolution. All three papers had been sympathetic to the wave of activist opinion which had emerged in Sweden during

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39. Nurmio 1957, pp. 18—21, 28—32; Paasivirta 1957, pp. 25, 28.
40. DN 23.3.1917; Soc-Dem 22.3.1917.
41. SvD 25.3.1917.

1915 and had been favourably disposed towards the Finnish volunteer movement. Prior to the announcement of the March Manifesto, *Aftonbladet* warned Finland's politicians to be on their guard against agreeing to partial concessions, as had happened in 1905, and to aim for an internationally-backed solution to the Finnish question.[42] All three papers printed statements by the Stockholm representatives of the volunteer movement at the end of March condemning acceptance of the new post-manifesto status quo in Finland and demanding a radically new approach to the question of guaranteeing the security of Finland's future position.[43]

Although coverage of events in Finland in the Swedish press grew substantially during the spring of 1917, commentators remained cautious in the extent of their political analysis. It had come to be assumed, both within the Swedish government and by the leading Swedish papers, that excessive Swedish comment on the state of Finnish politics could easily rebound against Finnish interests by creating difficulties in Petrograd. The fact that Finland remained to all intents and purposes under Russian occupation forced Swedish observers to be doubtful about the extent of possible future changes in Finland's position and to see these changes as largely dependent on the general development of the international balance of power.[44] Finnish 'separatist' opinion was often closely linked by the liberal and social democratic press with the pro-German lobby.

News of the Finnish reform bill in July 1917 was reported in the Swedish press alongside that of the attempts by the Ukraine to secede from Russia and the German National Assembly's statement favouring a peace settlement. *Aftonbladet*, together with the other Swedish papers which had previously been sympathetic towards the volunteer movement, enthusiastically described the Finnish Diet's decision of 18 July as representing an important step forward towards the country's major aim of independence.[45] The liberal and left-wing press, in the shape of *Dagens Nyheter* and *Social-Demokraten*, took a more cautiously

42. Abl 19.3., 21.3.1917; StD 28.3.1917.
43. Abl 22.3.1917; StD 22.3., 27.3.1917; NDA 22.3.1917.
44. StD 2.5.1817; DN 12.5.1917.
45. Abl 22.7.1917; StD 21.7.1917; NDA 22.7.1917; SvD 21.7., 22.7., 27.7.1917.

optimistic view, stressing the many problems and restrictions imposed on Finland by her political and geographical position.[46]

The October Revolution in Petrograd and the German army's advance into the Baltic provinces during the autumn of 1917 provoked a wide debate in Sweden about the extent of the changes in the overall situation in the northern Baltic and their impact on Sweden's international position. A number of Swedish politicians who had actively supported Swedish activism in 1915 began to demand a reassessment of Sweden's foreign policy strategy. These moves, representing a general right-wing attack on the policy of neutrality advocated by Edén's government, were supported by *Aftonbladet, Nya Dagligt Allehanda* and *Stockholms Dagblad.*

The question of Russia's uncertain internal situation, doubts over the continued existence of the Empire as a political entity and the possible development of Russian-German relations, dominated the increasingly tense Swedish debate surrounding the country's position. It was generally assumed amongst right-wing opinion that Russia was on the decline and entering on a period of gradual disintegration. This also naturally prompted the re-emergence of the Åland Islands question. This was given further momentum following the sensational revelations by the Soviet government of documents showing that the Tsarist authorities had agreed a programme of permanent fortifications for the Islands with France and perhaps the other Western powers in February 1917. News of this provoked a number of Swedish papers to suggest that the Islands should be annexed to Sweden, arguing that this in any case reflected the wishes of the local population.[47]

All this contributed to increased column space being devoted to Finnish affairs, either independently or linked to the Åland Islands issue, in the Swedish press during the late autumn of 1917. *Aftonbladet* made great play of what it described as the 'historical and ethnic obligations' linking Sweden to Finland in an article published on 8 November, while also stressing the importance of improving Sweden's international position in the Baltic. The paper even went so far as to suggest the idea of using Swedish troops to temporarily occupy Finland to protect both countries'

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46. DN 21.7.1917; Soc-Dem 21.7.1917.
47. NDA 26.11.1917; StD 27.11., 2.12.1917; SvD 28.11., 30.11.1917.

interests, and hinted that, in compensation, Finland might consider transferring the Åland Islands to Swedish sovereignty.[48]

The November General Strike and its accompanying violence, together with Finland's steadily worsening social conditions, served to strengthen the call in Sweden for sending humanitarian aid to Finland, above all food. Supporters of this move stressed the similarity of some of the problems faced by the two countries, painting a rosy picture of the possibility of an independent Finland closely allied to Sweden. A few hinted at the more distant possibility of Finland's one day being reunited with Sweden, reawakening memories of Sweden's great power past.[49]

Aftonbladet's enthusiasm for the Finnish cause was further reflected in its proposal made on 1 December, nearly a week before Finland's actual declaration of independence, that Sweden should recognise Finnish independence forthwith, a call subsequently taken up in largely similar form by *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* and *Stockholms Dagblad*.[50] Edén's government, supported by a large parliamentary majority, was careful to keep a judicious distance between itself and the views of this vocal, but nevertheless small group sympathetic to the Finnish cause. The Social Democrats and Liberals in particular favoured a cautious and restrained style of foreign policy. *Social-Demokraten* strongly opposed the idea put forward in the pages of *Aftonbladet* at the beginning of December for some form of Swedish intervention in Finland, arguing that any move of this type would seriously undermine Swedish neutrality. It would be foolish to gain sovereignty over the Åland Islands at the cost of sacrificing Swedish neutrality, the paper argued, a view echoed by *Dagens Nyheter* in its condemnation of any acceptance of sovereignty over the Islands in exchange for helping Finland in her hour of need. *Social-Demokraten*, together with the liberal press, nevertheless favoured sending food aid to Finland.[51]

Finland's declaration of independence naturally gave added impetus to the discussion of Finland and Finnish affairs in

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48. Abl 8.11.1917.
49. Abl 16.11., 26.11.1917.
50. Abl 1.12.1917; NDA 11.12.1917; StD 13.12.1917.
51. Soc-Dem 7.12., 11.12., 12.12., 13.12., 18.12.1917; DN 10.12.1917; *Forum* 1.12.1917.

Sweden. In line with its overall cautious approach, the Swedish government decided against immediately recognising the Finnish move until the attitude of the major powers, including Russia, became clear. Sweden did not feel herself in a position to recognise Finland's independence alone, as Gustav V made plain to the Finnish government delegation sent to Stockholm to sound out Swedish attitudes on the question on 28 December, and echoed by the Swedish Prime Minister, Edén, in a speech two days later on 30 December.[52] The Swedish government's reserved response was greeted with some bitter comment and dissatisfaction in the Swedish press.[53]

The attitude of the new Soviet government to Finland's declaration of independence was closely linked to its insecure position immediately following the October Revolution. Its influence within Russia was initially restricted to a relatively small area outside Petrograd and Moscow and a few other major cities, and was especially weak in the countryside. Its continued existence was also threatened by White Russian military action and the imminent danger of a German attack south of the Gulf of Finland against Petrograd.

Finland's position was therefore prominent among the Bolshevik government's concerns when it began negotiations with Germany at Brest-Litovsk in December. It was assumed in Petrograd that the Finnish question would emerge at the talks and that an independent Finnish delegation might also take part following Finland's unilateral declaration of independence. The possible attitude of the government in Helsinki, its potential sympathies with Germany and its willingness to adopt a conciliatory approach to Petrograd, were important factors to the new Soviet authorities. Finland represented a significant potential security problem for the government in Petrograd. It is not surprising therefore that Lenin's encouragement to the Finnish socialists to begin a popular uprising and seize power, made in a speech on 5 December at the All-Russian naval congress, was given at the same time as the beginning of the Brest-Litovsk talks. Similar encouragement was

52. Pakaslahti 1937, pp. 27—30. See Edén's speech on 30.12.1917. Also Soc-Dem 31.12.1917.
53. NDA 29.12.1917; Hamilton 1956, p. 193.

also provided by Stalin, the People's Commissar for Minority Nationalities, when he attended the Social Democratic party congress in Helsinki at the end of November.[54]

Svinhufvud's government, however, did not look upon the idea of establishing contact with the ideologically suspect Soviet authorities with any great enthusiasm at the beginning of December 1917. This reluctance was given added weight by Enckell's opinion that it was highly probable that the Bolshevik government would in any event soon collapse.[55] This doubt over the continued existence of the régime in Petrograd and the instability of the internal situation in Russia in general also affected the socialist leaders, who made no attempt to press the Finnish authorities to immediately approach the Soviet government on the question of recognition of Finland's declaration of independence.[56] The view that some move would nevertheless have to be made towards Russia, however, steadily gained ground among the members of the government. By way of a compromise solution, the Diet decided on 22 December to appeal directly to the All-Russian National Constituent Assembly on the question of Russian recognition of Finnish independence, thereby bypassing the contentious issue of Finland's official attitude to the Bolshevik government.

As it became clear that the new government in Petrograd showed all the signs of remaining in office at least for the immediately foreseeable future, the Social Democrats, who up until now had shared a similarly cautious approach to their non-socialist opponents, decided that contact with the authorities in Petrograd would be necessary. The party's executive committee decided on 23 December to send a three-man delegation, made up of Evert Huttunen, Kullervo Manner and Eetu Salin, to Petrograd to meet the Bolshevik leadership to argue the case for a favourable Soviet response to Finland's declaration of independence. During the discussions that entailed, Lenin agreed to the Finnish request in

54. See Lenin's speech to the All-Russian Naval Congress on 5.12.1917 and Stalin's speech at the Finnish Social Democratic Party's conference on 27.11.1917. Also, The Bolshevik Revolution 1917—1918, p. 284; 'Kansalaissota dokumentteina I, pp. 288—91; Lenin: Teokset 35, p. 290.

55. Paasivirta 1957, p. 26.

56. See K. H. Wiik's memorandum 'Miten Suomen itsenäisyys saatiin tunnustetuksi' (TA 327 47:471 "1917").

principle on 29 December. Trotsky, in his capacity as Bolshevik Foreign Minister, emphasised, however, that Finland would have to address an official request to the government in Petrograd before official recognition would be possible.[57]

Finland's failure to gain rapid Western recognition of her independence served to dampen the government's faith in the wisdom of directing the entire weight of the country's diplomatic effort westwards. It also soon became clear that the German government, which, it had been hoped in Helsinki, would be favourable to the Finnish request, would only be willing to recognise Finnish independence after the Soviet government had done so. Sweden's similar attitude had also by now become known to Helsinki.[58] The Finnish government was left with little option but to rethink its initial refusal to present a formal request to Petrograd, especially after the news of the departure of the socialist delegation to the Russian capital leaked out.

The government nevertheless continued its cautious approach towards the Soviet authorities after deciding to sound out the latters' attitude on the question. Only after Enckell and K. G. Idman had established contact with the government in Petrograd and received a favourable response to their enquiries, did Svinhufvud, together with a group of advisors, travel to Petrograd to present the Russian authorities with an official request for Bolshevik recognition of Finnish independence. This was agreed to by the Bolshevik government on 31 December and approved by the party's executive central committee on 4 January 1918.

The background factors which led to the all-important Soviet decision to recognise Finnish independence are difficult to pin down with any certainty.[59] The tense internal situation in Russia and the Bolshevik government's difficult position, the party's declared positive ideological attitude to minority nationalities and the earlier promises given to the Finns, all contributed to the decision. The Bolshevik's need to consolidate their overall position and safeguard the country's north-western border

57. Paasivirta 1957, p. 32.
58. Nurmio 1957, pp. 28—33; Hbl 28.12.1917.
59. Paasivirta 1949A, pp. 460—1; Paasivirta 1957, pp. 121—3; Polvinen I 1967, pp. 155—60, 181—3, 191—3; Lappalainen 1977, p. 89; Upton I 1980, pp. 358—9.

obviously also weighed heavily. Although no other country had agreed to recognise Finland's independence by the end of December, the Bolshevik authorities were no doubt aware of the Finnish government's various attempts to persuade the Western powers to do so and the willingness of some of these to recognise Finland as and when the Soviet government made a similar decision.

It must also be remembered that no other non-Russian nationality within the Empire of the time represented such a clearly-defined geographical and ethnic entity as Finland, a fact backed up by the country's century-long period of autonomy. Many prominent Bolshevik figures also had personal experience of Finland as a result of their stays in Finland and their contacts with other groups opposed to the Tsarist authorities prior to the Revolution.

The ultimate nature of the new government in Helsinki and its likely future attitudes towards a Soviet state remained somewhat unclear to the new Petrograd administration. The Bolshevik analysis of the situation in Finland appears to have concluded that independence was supported by all political groups in Finland to a greater or lesser extent, a fact reflected in the Diet's appeal made to the All-Russian National Constituent Assembly, the discussions the socialist delegation had had in Petrograd and the official request presented by the Finnish government. The additional fact that Lenin, together with the other major Bolshevik leaders, had since the spring of 1917 publicly advocated their support for national self-determination served to give the Soviet government relatively little room for manoeuvre on the issue by December 1917. Taken together, the ideological background and the immediate political situation made the final Bolshevik decision the most probable.

The Soviet decision to recognise Finnish independence was also linked to the Bolshevik vision of future political and ideological developments, including Lenin's own theory developed earlier in the war, which visualised Russia's minority nationalities going through a temporary period of independence before finally returning to the Russian fold as revolution spread outside Russia's national borders. In making his decision as head of the Soviet state to accept Finland's declaration of independence, however, Lenin left himself open to criticism from within the Bolshevik party. His

defence of the government's move against the first wave of criticism at the beginning of January and subsequent ones leaned heavily on the theory of worldwide revolution and the associated idea of the eventual return of the minority nationalities to Mother Russia.

A similar line of argument was also later used by Stalin in his defence of Lenin and the need for a peace treaty against those opposed to its terms, following the signing of the Brest-Litovsk agreement between Russia and Germany at the beginning of March, when the Soviet government was forced to relinquish the Baltic provinces, the Ukraine and part of the Caucasus. In an attempt to lighten the pessimistic mood which followed the treaty during March and April, Stalin listed the national groups, which included Finland, which he assumed would eventually be reunited with Russia.[60] It cannot be ignored, however, that there was a distinct difference in the tone and attitude within Russia towards the whole question of Finnish independence between the Soviet government and the Bolshevik party itself, and between the Russian views communicated at an official level and those aired within the party.

By deciding to recognise Finnish independence on 31 December 1917, the Soviet government also removed the major obstacle standing in the way of recognition for a number of other countries. The Soviet decision alone proved sufficient for the Swedish authorities, who followed the Russian lead and recognised Finland on 4 January. Since the Soviet government's decision was only finally approved by the executive central committee on 4 January, by deciding not to wait for this formality Sweden became the first country to officially recognise Finnish independence, albeit after provisional Soviet recognition.

Unlike the Swedes, the German authorities waited for official confirmation from Petrograd of the Russian decision to reach Berlin, which it did on 6 January, before deciding to recognise Finland's new status. This caution on the part of the German government was linked to the fact that the peace negotiations with the Soviet authorities had reached a critical point following their postponement for ten days on 26 December. France, as the first of

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60. Stalin: Teokset IV, p. 75.

the Western powers, made her decision before the Germans, announcing her recognition virtually simultaneously with Sweden on 4 January. This in turn caused the German government when it came to announce German recognition two days later to add that Germany's actual decision had, in fact, been taken on 4 January, the same day as the French one.[61]

This relatively rapid recognition of Finnish independence by Russia, Sweden, France and Germany served to show the progress the Finnish cause had made on the European scene in the matter of only a few weeks. Finland's independent status had been recognised by the successors to the Tsarist authorities, two representatives of the two major alliances involved in the war, and a Scandinavian neutral. Of the major powers, only Britain refused to grant recognition until the opinion of the All-Russian National Constituent Assembly was known.

61. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 33—4.

IV Finland in the Final Stages of the War

The recognition by Soviet Russia and a number of Western countries of Finland's declaration of independence was the cause of some considerable satisfaction in Helsinki, not only to the government but also to the Diet and a wide spectrum of political opinion, following the weeks of uncertainty which had intervened between the government's statement and its first foreign recognition. Despite the general hostility felt among non-socialist opinion towards the Soviet government, the Bolsheviks as a whole, and the Western powers and Sweden as well, there was no disguising the enthusiasm and relief, and some surprise, felt at the news of the recognition of Finland's new status by these powers.

The main focus of attention naturally centred on the Soviet government's decision. A number of non-socialist commentators were surprised that diplomatic recognition had finally proved more rapidly forthcoming from Finland's eastern neighbour than from the West, and that the shedding of the country's constitutional ties with Russia appeared to have taken place so painlessly.[1] Russia was described by some papers as having 'paid her debt' to Finland by granting her her independence. Whilst there was no let-up in the ideological criticism of Bolshevism as an unwelcome social and political phenomenon, commentators found it difficult not to find some grudging words of gratitude for the Soviet authorities. Hopes were also expressed that the future

1. UP 5.1., 8.1.1918.

would bring good relations between the two countries.[2] Those papers which had been most closely associated with the independence cause, including *Uusi Päivä,* nevertheless did not forget to underline Germany's past role in encouraging Finnish moves towards independence, describing Germany as a country which had always supported the interests of the small countries of Europe.[3]

The significance and importance of the wide recognition that the Finnish declaration of independence had achieved was also recognised by the socialist press. Having been effectively excluded from the preparations surrounding the declaration, the socialists now took this opportunity to emphasise their role in establishing the contact with the Soviet authorities which had led to Russian recognition.[4] The socialist papers, in fact, were not slow to claim that the all-important agreement with Russia had been achieved as a direct result of following the policy of negotiated agreement which the socialists had advocated in the Diet on 6 December, in opposition to the uncompromising stance adopted by the Svinhufvud government. The overall tone of socialist comment was optimistic. Internationally, the favourable developments at the Russo-German talks at Brest-Litovsk were seen as strengthening the likelihood of a general European-wide peace agreement, while on the domestic front the country's newly-won independence was seen as offering real potential for a major reform of domestic social injustices and a more open struggle against the capitalist system.[5]

Following the achievement of at least partial international recognition for its declaration of independence, the government now set about the job of appointing Finland's first official diplomatic representatives abroad. Alexis Gripenberg and Edvard Hjelt were appointed as temporary chargés d'affaires, in Stockholm and Berlin respectively, in early January. Carl Enckell was appointed to Petrograd on 23 January to take charge of negotiations with the Soviet government on what were described as 'questions

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2. US 6.1.1918; HS 6.1.1918; SvT 7.1.1918; Hbl 6.1.1918.
3. UP 8.1.1918.
4. *Kansan Lehti* 3.1.1918; *Sosialidemokraatti* 10.1.1918; *Kansan Tahto* 4.1.1918.
5. *Työmies* 11.1., 20.1.1918; *Sosialisti* 7.1.1918; *Kansan Tahto* 7.1.1918; *Savon Työmies* 8.1.1918.

relating to the dissolution of Finland's constitutional ties with Russia'.[6] A new government department to handle foreign affairs, the forerunner of the later Ministry of Foreign Affairs, had been established on 10 January. Disagreements about the overall shape of future foreign policy, despite the decision announced to the Diet on 8 January that the government was committed to a neutral foreign policy, served to slow down the early work of the new department. The idea of neutrality ran counter to the views of a number of leading government figures, who advocated close links with Germany as the best way to ensure the country's future security and retain some say in the fate of the volunteer battalion. This conflict of ideas also contributed to the delay which ensued in the naming of a senator responsible for foreign affairs, and meant in practice that Svinhufvud, in his capacity as chairman of the Senate, retained control over foreign affairs questions.[7]

Finland's declaration of independence and its recognition abroad alone, however, did not bring the country immediate and complete national sovereignty at a time when a significant number of Russian troops remained on Finnish soil. Although the overall size of the Russian military presence had significantly fallen from its peak of some 100,000 men reached in August and September 1917 as a result of the Provisional Government's desire to be able to repulse any possible German landing along Finland's southern coastline, some 40,000 men nevertheless remained by the latter half of January 1918, a cause for some understandable disquiet on the part of the Finnish government.[8] The primary importance of resolving this problem was recognised and discussed in non-socialist circles immediately following the news of the first foreign acceptance of Finland's new status. While not blind to the problem, socialist opinion tended to regard the whole question of any evacuation of Russian troops as one ultimately best left alone as long as the Brest-Litovsk negotiations remained unresolved. Convinced as they were of the central importance of maintaining friendly relations with the Soviet government, the socialists argued that Finland should be willing to contribute to the defence

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6. Paasivirta 1968, pp. 44—5.
7. Ibid., pp. 41—2.
8. Rauanheimo 1950, p. 167; Lappalainen 1977, p. 99.

of Petrograd against any possible German attack.[9]

The government's second major foreign policy problem revolved around the country's steadily worsening economic isolation, which had set in in earnest following the virtual collapse of trading relations with Russia in the latter half of 1917. The continued severance of trading links with both Germany and the Western allies, Finland's other major trading partners, also presented major problems. Contacts with Sweden, Finland's only other remaining significant partner abroad, had been somewhat improved with the dispatch to Stockholm, in the late autumn of the previous year, of a number of trading agents to supplement the work of the official commercial attaché who had taken up office in October.[10]

Hopes for an improvement in the situation were initially pinned on the peace negotiations then taking place between the Soviet and German governments, which, if successful, held out the opportunity of opening up the Baltic to trade. A Finnish trade delegation was sent to the Ukraine in mid-January following the latter's signing of a separate peace with Germany, in the hope of negotiating an agreement with the Kiev government giving Finland much-needed access to Ukrainian foodstuffs in return for exports of Finnish industrial goods.[11]

The business community hoped that Finland would be able to benefit from her non-combatant status in the war. As and when normal trading relations were re-established, it was hoped that Finnish industry would be able to exploit her large reserves of sawn timber accumulated over the war years in the boom conditions likely to be generated by the first flush of post-war reconstruction.[12]

1. Towards civil war

A combination of circumstances made Finland both the first new independent state to be born out of the First World War and the first country outside Russia to be drawn by its own internal social

9. Paasivirta 1957, p. 46; *Työmies* 26.1.1918.
10. Hbl 2.12.1917.
11. *Mercator* 18.1., 25.1.1918.
12. *Kauppalehti* 23.11., 28.11.1917; Hbl 28.11.1917.

tensions into the whirlwind of civil war. Finnish society had gone through a number of rapid changes during the course of 1917, virtually all of which, to some extent or another, had led to a deepening and consolidation of the schism between Right and Left, a development which had prevented the emergence of any real spirit of social or political compromise. The indecision and argument surrounding the question of supreme governmental power had resulted in the country being deprived of adequate internal policing capable of maintaining social order for the majority of 1917. The state of limbo that had resulted had allowed the pent-up forces within society to range relatively freely and uncontrolled.

The view that what was at stake was little less than the preservation of the entire existing social fabric had spread in non-socialist circles during the latter months of 1917. Any demands for reform had increasingly come to be seen in this camp as direct threats to the continued existence of society in its familiar form and the security of the non-working classes. Reform and social change came to be looked upon as synonymous with a policy of dangerous political concession and one which could only lead to renewed social ferment.[13] Society, for all its injustices and imperfections, had to be defended against revolutionary anarchy, it was argued. The labour movement, with the memory of the revolutionary events of 1905 still fresh in its mind and the example of the October Revolution even fresher, found it difficult to disengage itself from the magic-like aura associated with mass popular action. Socialist leaders were also faced with increasing difficulties in maintaining their authority within the ranks of the labour movement itself. As the year wore on, these problems only worsened, while the more established problems of social insecurity and low living standards among the working class were compounded during the latter half of 1917 by steadily deepening mass unemployment, growing inflation and increasingly severe food shortages.[14]

At the other end of the political spectrum, the General Strike in November and the murders of a number of non-socialist figures

13. Paasivirta 1957, p. 63.
14. Kirby 1979, p. 46.

which took place in its wake, coupled with the revolution in Russia, contributed to a dangerous upswing in suspicion and fear of all things socialist and of the labour movement's ultimate loyalty to the Finnish cause. For the labour movement, both leadership and membership, the sudden ending of the General Strike had been an unwelcome defeat, signalling what appeared to be a major setback to the Left's influence in society. The movement's leaders, in particular, lost some of their earlier confidence in their ability to shape the country's future. The movement's view of its opponents as purely reactionary and committed to opposing socialism in any form intensified, undermining the position of those within the Social Democratic party supporting parliamentary action, while at the same time strengthening that of those calling for open class conflict. The end of 1917 saw a small group of left-wing trade unionists with close links to radical circles in Petrograd going back to 1910 assume a growing role on the Left.[15]

The approval by the Diet on 12 January 1918, in the face of left-wing opposition, of a government proposal, prompted by the activities of the Red Guard militia set up with the approval of the Social Democrats and the trade union leadership, for the establishment of a new police force and army represented an attempt by the government to regain control over the worsening social situation and civil unrest.[16] In practice, however, it came to act very much as a double-edged weapon against social disorder by uniting the labour movement in a concerted defence of its position. It also indirectly gave added impetus to the attempts of the more revolutionary-minded elements within the Social Democrats to gain control of the party. A shift in power in favour of the latter did in fact take place within the party leadership from mid-January onwards. This take-over was rapidly followed by the beginning of preparations for a nationwide uprising at the end of January. The decision by the Left to embark on a course of revolutionary action was, it should be emphasised, the result first and foremost of social and political developments within Finland, rather than of those in

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15. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 57—61, 67; Paasivirta 1967, p. 12: Lappalainen 1977, pp. 103—6; Lappalainen I 1981, pp. 15—20; Upton I 1980, pp. 437—42.
16. Paasivirta 1957, p. 66; Lappalainen 1977, p. 104; Kirby 1979, p. 48.

Russia, although events in Russia and particularly the October Revolution obviously served to heighten revolutionary enthusiasm and convince those on the Left of the wisdom of such a move.

Parallel to these developments in the socialist camp, General Mannerheim, acting at the request of the government, had begun military preparations designed to safeguard the maintenance of public order and allow the carrying-out of local cleaning-up operations to give his White forces a secure operational base. Mannerheim planned to establish his headquarters in southern Ostrobothnia, stripping the scattered Russian troops in the area of their arms when the opportunity arose. These and other plans, however, were put in a radically different light following the self-styled occupation of Viipuri in South-East Finland by Civil Guard units on 22 January in a move to isolate the local Red Guards and the Russian troops stationed in the town. This action made Viipuri an immediate focus of national attention and indirectly accelerated the outbreak of open social conflict elsewhere in the country. The trade unions in the area responded by declaring a general strike. The situation was temporarily defused by the local Russian troops who, finding themselves cut off from Petrograd, presented the occupying Civil Guards with an ultimatum to withdraw, which the latter complied with.[17]

The sudden emergence of Viipuri as a dangerous flash-point took Mannerheim largely by surprise, forcing him to bring forward the start of his own operations in southern Ostrobothnia against the wishes of Svinhufvud in Helsinki, who had asked him to postpone action as long as possible. The small scattered Russian garrison detachments in the area were stripped of their arms on Mannerheim's orders on the night of 27—28 January by Civil Guard units.[18] This move exactly coincided with a coup d'état set in motion in Helsinki by radical elements of the labour movement, although purely by chance, as neither Mannerheim nor the revolutionary leaders in the South had any definite forewarning of each other's plans. Of all those involved, it was Svinhufvud who was caught most unprepared by the course of developments, both

17. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 77—8; Polvinen I 1967, pp. 217—20; Lappalainen 1977, pp. 110—14, 118—9; Lappalainen I 1981, pp. 24—6.
18. J. O. Hannula 1956, p. 58; Lappalainen 1977, p. 120.

by the change decided on by Mannerheim in the timetable of operations in southern Ostrobothnia and the Left's surprise coup in the capital, about which he had had only the most general suspicions.[19]

The scale of the chain of events which unfurled after 28 January came as something of a surprise to virtually everybody, the White forces under Mannerheim and their backers in Helsinki, the leaders of the uprising in Helsinki, as well as the more moderate leaders of the labour movement in the capital and the provinces, who suddenly found power had slipped irretrievably out of their hands. Events were to show that developments had in fact gone much further than either side knew or supposed: the country was on the brink of national civil war.[20]

2. Red versus White

Contact had been established by one of the groups within the radical wing of the labour movement responsible for the decision to attempt a coup d'état in Helsinki, prior to its actually taking place on 28 January, with circles in Petrograd in an attempt to secure arms supplies for the uprising. The fact that weapons proved forthcoming points to those who approved the shipment as having had some forewarning of what was planned in Helsinki.[21] While no one in Petrograd could have been under any illusion that arms alone would guarantee the success of an uprising in Finland, it was clearly realised that arms were a necessity if it was to have any chance of getting off the ground. A revolt in Finland would also help to relieve some of the pressure on the new Soviet government.

Following the successful disarming of Russian troops in southern Ostrobothnia, Mannerheim placed the Civil Guards under his command in defensive positions to await further developments. This decision was largely forced on him by his shortage of manpower and the need to secure his base in Ostrobothnia,

19. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 77—8; Lappalainen 1977, pp. 118—26.
20. Paasivirta, 1957, p. 80.
21. Polvinen I 1967, p. 208; Lappalainen I 1981, pp. 52—3.

particularly on his northern flank. Oulu and Tornio were occupied to ensure a secure line of communications across the border to Sweden. A number of Civil Guard units, however, acting against Mannerheim's instructions, decided on their own initiative to advance southwards, fanning out from the important rail junctions at Haapamäki and Pieksämäki in central Finland, rapidly establishing positions to the south of Vilppula and Mikkeli. Civil Guard units operating in Karelia, similarly acting on their own initiative, established a bridge-head to the south of the river Vuoksi. Gaining contact with these far-flung units proved difficult for Mannerheim operating from his headquarters in Ostrobothnia.[22]

Although having sanctioned the uprising in Helsinki, the labour movement's revolutionary leadership actually possessed little control over events in the early stages and, together with the movement as a whole, were to all intents and purposes swept along in the tide of events following the lead given by those in the capital. The aim of the Red leadership centred on radically rewriting the balance of power which had been established in Finland as a result of the parliamentary elections held in the autumn of 1917 and the developments which had followed in their wake. The Left's plan for a future form of government for Finland, giving a central role to the Diet, was only published in February and clearly reflected a conviction that the labour movement would be likely to enjoy the support of the majority of the population. The document did, however, contain the important proviso that 'there shall be no restriction on the means to be used... should reactionary forces (again) threaten the country.'[23] The social reforms proposed in the socialist programme were decidedly more social democratic in nature than revolutionary or socialist, nor did they show much similarity to those favoured in the radical demands espoused by Bolshevik ideology.[24] The reforms called for, in fact, were largely ones which had already been voiced before the beginning of the Civil War from within the labour

22. J. O. Hannula 1956, p. 58; Hersalo I 1966, pp. 483—9, 522, 524; Upton I 1980, pp. 511—16.
23. Holmberg 1943, p. 110; Paasivirta 1957, pp. 84—5; Upton I 1981, pp. 217—21.
24. H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 273—6; Upton II 1981, pp. 162—6, 214—7, 222—3.

movement.

Lacking any clear idea of what the reception of the Helsinki insurrection might be throughout the country as a whole, even among the working class, the Red leadership appears to have optimistically assumed that its move would somehow inevitably trigger a mass revolutionary landslide, leading to the installation of a revolutionary government. In practice, however, the leadership did not possess any clearly — formulated military strategy about how this was to be achieved. The sudden and unexpected appearance of consolidated opposition to their aims, in the form of Civil Guard forces advancing southwards, forced the Red leaders to hastily improvise defensive positions as far north as was practical, along a line dictated by the rail connections between Pori, Tampere, Riihimäki, Viipuri and Petrograd. With the gravitation of the frontline towards an axis running from the north of Pori through Vilppula eastwards to Mäntyharju and south-east to the Vuoksi, the ground was laid for the development of a trench war style of conflict in those areas where the opposing forces were most firmly established, along the railway lines and major roads.

Mannerheim issued a statement addressed to the Russian forces still remaining in the country on 29 January, appealing for their non-interference in the internal struggle between Red and White forces.[25] The Russian response to events, however, was somewhat uncoordinated. The 22 Army Corps initially instructed the forces under its command to withdraw from western Finland in the direction of Viipuri, where the headquarters staff were based, and the Karelian Isthmus. This was soon counter-ordered by the revolutionary leadership of the Russian Soldiers' Soviet in Helsinki, which instructed Russian forces to remain where they were and be prepared to resist any attempts by the Civil Guards to strip them of their arms, as had taken place in southern Ostrobothnia. This latter order reflected a desire both to continue protecting Russian military interests and to show solidarity with the revolutionary cause in Helsinki. The situation was further complicated by the official orders issued between 5 and 11 February allowing for the withdrawal of conscripts drafted between 1904 and 1914, a move which accelerated the pattern of

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25. Paasivirta 1957, p. 78.

progressive Russian withdrawal which had been put in hand in Finland from December 1917 onwards.[26]

A large number of Russian weapons and other equipment fell into the hands of the Red forces in the early days of the Civil War following the beginning of the Russian withdrawal. With the exception of a single unit which appeared on the front in the Vilppula-Ruovesi area in early February, and a Lettish unit operating further eastwards in the area around Mäntyharju somewhat later, however, no Russian units consistently fought alongside Red forces. The Red leadership did have some access to Russian military advisers, but it seems doubtful whether their operational advice had any significant impact on the overall progress of hostilities, largely because of the primitive nature of the Red Guards' military organisation and its inability to respond to the demands of mobile warfare. Some Russian specialists were nevertheless recruited by Red forces to train and direct artillery crews.[27]

Both sides in the struggle were hampered by their lack of military experience and the fact that their forces were made up of hastily-formed units. Action along the front on both sides was in large measure restricted to a small proportion of the total number of men involved. When the flow of volunteers on the Red side began to dry up, the Red leadership turned to the trade unions to act as temporary draft boards to provide the additional manpower needed. This method recommended itself as it served to ensure a fair degree of political reliability among the new recruits. It only proved effective, however, in urban areas and other centres of population where the option of joining the Red Guards provided an attractive alternative to unemployment and poverty.[28] Recruitment among the tenant farmer and rural landless populations operated against a substantially different background. Decisions to join the Red Guard in these areas were often made in the face of the silent opposition wielded by the deadweight of traditional conservative rural opinion and the unspoken threat of

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26. Ibid., pp. 124—6.
27. On the part played by the Russians on the Red side, see Paasivirta 1957, pp. 126—8; Polvinen I 1967, pp. 228—39; Lappalainen I 1981, pp. 23—4, 78, 84, 131, 166—8.
28. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 173—4; Lappalainen I 1981, pp. 157—63.

possible future reprisals. This, together with the fact that revolutionary sympathies were at their strongest in urban areas, led to the composition of the Red Guards being distinctly balanced in favour of the urban proletariat against a smaller number drawn from the rural poor.[29]

From the very beginning of the conflict, the White army was able to draw on a reserve of professional officers and other ranks with varying degrees of military training. This group was substantially reinforced at the end of February with the return from Germany of the Jäger volunteer unit, numbering some 1,200 men. The White leadership was therefore relatively well provided with the potential to gradually develop its military infrastructure and adapt its forces to the demands of mobile warfare. Conscription was introduced in the latter half of February in areas under White control when voluntary recruitment began to fail to meet manpower requirements. Those elements known or suspected of socialist sympathies were carefully weeded out. Prior to being deployed, conscripts went through a brief military training programme coordinated by Jäger volunteers.[30]

Administrative power on the Red side in the conflict was wielded by a body known as the People's Delegation. Lower down the administrative hierarchy, progress proved slow in developing a serviceable infrastructure to replace the earlier pattern of local government in Red-occupied areas. The socialist leadership had little time in the midst of the Civil War to outline any overall programme for the future organisation of the country's commerce or industry. The leadership's energies were virtually solely concentrated on keeping industry and agriculture in production and minimising the inevitable dislocations caused by the hostilities.[31]

Following the early events of the conflict concentrated in southern Ostrobothnia, hostilities grew dramatically and spread along wide areas of the front which developed between Red and

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29. Estimates of the exact proportions of rural and urban recruits are complicated by the fact that many of the rural landless described themselves, despite their social origins, as working class as a result of their previous employment in the Russian-sponsored fortification programme.
30. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 184—8; O. Manninen 1974, pp. 92—6, 109—14.
31. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 84, 87—9.

White forces in southern Finland. The fact that advancing White forces met purely Finnish resistance with only the barest smattering of a Russian presence caused some surprise among Civil Guard units, although this had been predicted by Mannerheim and his headquarters staff. In their public pronouncements, however, the Whites glossed over this fact. In addition to underlining their task of putting down the Red-inspired revolt and returning the rule of law to southern Finland, they also emphasised the struggle's wider ideological significance. It came increasingly in fact to be referred to as a 'war of liberation' in White circles, particularly in the White stronghold of Ostrobothnia, following the practice introduced by the German-trained volunteers, with the Russians being identified as the White's main and ultimate enemy.

The term 'war of liberation' spread significantly during the latter stages of the conflict until it came to occupy a prominent position in White propaganda, despite the fact that by this stage the role taken by Russian forces had become minimal, as had the overall Russian influence on events in Finland. This was largely a reflection of a clear White desire to give the struggle in its decisive final stages the mark of being one directed against Russian oppression and part, in a wider perspective, of the international struggle against the spread of Bolshevism. By inference therefore, the struggle came to be portrayed in White ideological rhetoric in almost crusade-like terms, as one aimed at purging the Finnish people of the curse of socialism.[32] The Whites' emphasis on describing the Civil War as one of liberation gained added momentum following the arrival of German troops to assist White forces at the beginning of April. Out of the tens of thousands fighting on the Red side, however, the combined White Finnish and German forces were opposed by what probably amounted to only some 150 Russians. The White picture of the Reds as traitors and betrayers of Finnish independence, however, stuck and deepened.[33]

Compared to the Reds, the White forces had the important advantage from the very beginning of the struggle that they were

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32. T. Manninen 1982, pp. 155—60, 178—9.
33. Ibid., pp. 101, 190—1, 194—8, 222—3.

able to operate in the areas under their control with the full back-up support of the country's official administrative infrastructure. Added to this, they also had an important edge in military organisation, with a leadership made up of trained and often experienced officers capable of adapting to new demands as they arose, and which, as the struggle developed, took on many of the traits of a true professional army.

The general operational potential of both the Red and White forces was nevertheless hampered by the fact that both the areas under their respective controls lacked internal political uniformity. Taking the results of the elections of autumn 1917 as a yardstick, neither side enjoyed more than a generous 50% of the support of the local population in the spring of 1918.

3. The international and domestic implications of the Civil War

Neither side in the Civil War was able to ignore the need to attract foreign backing for their struggle. Both White and Red forces found themselves faced by a similar problem, however, in the shape of the general lack of Finnish experience in the diplomatic field.

Some form of contact with Sweden was considered important by the revolutionary administration in order to prevent the Left becoming completely cut off from the West and to maintain trading ties with Finland's major trading partners in Western Europe. The movement's various attempts to establish ties with Sweden and further afield with the United States proved totally futile. Isolation from the West indirectly increased the Left's links with and dependence on Russia. The Soviet government soon emerged, therefore, as a central factor in the Left's contacts abroad. Negotiations between the Red authorities and the Bolshevik government were held in Petrograd at the end of February to clarify political relations between Soviet Russia and Finland, or that part of Finland under Red control, negotiations which the socialists hoped would strengthen their disputed political status.

An agreement between what was referred to as the Finnish Socialist Workers' Republic and Soviet Russia was signed on 1 March. Among its clauses, the Red authorities agreed to cede the

area around Ino on the Karelian Isthmus to Russia and guarantee to ensure Russian telegraph links to Sweden through Finland, reflecting the importance Russia attached to Finland as a line of contact between Petrograd and the West. In line with the spirit of internationalist revolutionary thinking of the time, the agreement also allowed the citizens of both countries the right to gain citizenship of the other country if they wished.[34] Despite the socialist leaders' clear desire to be seen to be acting as independently of the Russians as possible, the Soviet side undoubtedly carried the major influence in the negotiations. The potential of the socialists to adopt an independent position in Petrograd was, in the final analysis, limited by their isolation from the West and the instability and inadequacy of their control over the territory they occupied within Finland itself.

Following their occupation of Oulu and Tornio, the White forces were able to open up a land link with Sweden at the beginning of February. Overall communications between Vaasa, the temporary home of the official government, and the outside world, however, were relatively poor given the geographical distances involved and the slowness and inflexibility of the means available. The government's lack of its full complement of members and the absence of Svinhufvud, who had been unable to move to Vaasa, also further complicated the White authorities' handling of foreign affairs. Disagreements, sometimes amounting to open distrust, between the Vaasa government and Mannerheim's headquarters staff over foreign relations issues were also not uncommon.

The Vaasa authorities did have access, however, to the official Finnish diplomatic legations established in mid-January in Stockholm and Berlin. Particular difficulties were caused by the activities of Finnish activists abroad, especially in Sweden. Having supported the independence cause for some considerable time, often since the beginning of the war, activist figures often tended to assume that they had a natural right to a say in the country's affairs. The inevitable result was that much of the diplomacy carried out in the name of the White authorities lacked coordination and often went beyond the wishes and instructions of

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34. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 97—8; Polvinen I 1967, pp. 246—50.

the Vaasa government.[35] Finland's representatives in Berlin and Stockholm, Edvard Hjelt and Alexis Gripenberg, both members of the older generation of non-socialist politicians, acted relatively independently of Vaasa in directing the thrust of White diplomacy, often presenting their younger colleagues back home with little more than faits accomplis. Germany, motivated by a desire to develop Finland as a base from which to follow British moves in Murmansk and keep a check on events in Petrograd, was also not slow to use its powers of influence on Finnish affairs.[36]

In the early days of the struggle the White leadership made some effort to recruit volunteers from Sweden and acquire arms from both Sweden and Germany. As time went on, however, the Vaasa authorities increasingly came to abandon the style of neutral foreign policy which had been adopted in the immediate post-independence period. This was reflected in a clear shift during February towards closer contacts with Germany. This was undoubtedly linked to the impressive success of the German army's rapid advance along virtually the entire length of the Eastern Front following the breakdown of the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk and which was only halted by the peace agreement signed on 3 March, which ceded large areas in the East to Germany and brought an extensive eastward spread of German power and influence. Soon after the final signing of the Brest-Litovsk treaty, the Vaasa government itself signed two agreements with the Germans in Berlin on 7 March, laying the groundwork for the arrival of German troops in Finland and the development of bilateral trade relations. The latter of these agreements included a secret understanding giving Germany virtual control over Finland's entire foreign trade and tying Finland securely into the German sphere of economic influence.[37]

The arrival of German troops to reinforce White forces took place at the beginning of April with the landing of a division commanded by General von der Goltz at Hanko on the southern coast. This was quickly followed by a rapid advance on Helsinki which, together with the capture of Tampere by White units at about the same time, signalled a major turning-point in the

35. Tuompo 1938, 34—7, 46—8; Paasivirta 1957, p. 104.
36. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 104—5, 112—3; Rautkallio 1977, p. 90.
37. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 113—5; Rautkallio 1977, pp. 132—4.

struggle. The German landing at Hanko effectively broke the Red's hold on western Finland and served to accelerate the pace of White success, which had already begun in any case to outmatch that of their Red opponents. German troops occupied Helsinki and Hämeenlinna to the north, while further east White forces took Viipuri at the end of April. Following their withdrawal from western Finland, Russian troops had halted and taken up temporary positions on the Karelian Isthmus to ensure the protection of Petrograd. Viipuri and its surroundings remained of strategic importance to the Russians as long as scattered Russian units remained in southern Finland. White forces came up against determined joint Russian and Red Finnish resistance at Rautu on the Isthmus on the approaches to Petrograd at the end of April.[38]

The final result of the Civil War was ultimately decided by the superior resources and flexibility of the White army and the wider experience of its officer corps, from its commander-in-chief, Mannerheim, down to its German-trained field officers. Coupled to this, the Whites also possessed a greater sense of internal unity, together with a more integrated set of political aims and better morale.[39]

By the latter stages of the struggle, forces on both sides had reached some 70—80,000 men. The number of dead ran to some 3,000 all told during the course of the three-month conflict. More significantly, however, the number of those who lost their lives, both behind the lines during the war and in the repercussions afterwards, was much higher. Around 1,600 Whites were murdered by Red forces during the course of the war in southern Finland and some 800 Reds by the Whites in the rest of the country. In the aftermath of the occupation of Tampere and the ending of hostilities which followed soon after, over 8,000 Red prisoners were executed, while some 12,000 more Reds died in the hastily set-up prison camps, mainly of malnutrition, inadequate hygiene conditions and poor health. Of the over 28,000 who died in the Civil War and its aftermath, the proportion of those who died in active combat amounted only to between 20—25%.[40]

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38. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 214—5; Lappalainen II 1981, p. 88.
39. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 103, 170—1, 189—96; Lappalainen I 1981, p. 228.
40. Tanner 1919, pp. 12, 20; Paasivirta 1957, pp. 227—8; Mikola 1959, pp. 262—3; J. Paavolainen I 1966, 316—23, II 1967, 146—9.

The Civil War of 1918 was a conflict that grew out of, and to an important extent reinforced and consolidated, powerful and deep-rooted social antipathies and its repercussions came to have a significant impact on future developments. This was not restricted merely to those who took part in the struggle but filtered through into the whole body of society, being particularly evident in the reactions of the middle and upper classes in southern Finland, the traditional backbone of the country, who experienced some three months of Red occupation. It was precisely this section of the population which was prominent in celebrating the liberation of Helsinki by the Germans from the Reds. For the defeated Reds, the unhappy fate of many of those interned in the temporary prison camps or forced to flee the country made a deep impression which time proved slow to dim.

The events of the spring of 1918 came to play an important part in reshaping attitudes within Finland to the country's place in Europe and served to establish a distinct set of stereotypical attitudes towards Finland's neighbours and the outside world in general. Understandably, it was the White view of events which came to dominate. Among conservative opinion in the southern part of the country, the role of the German forces under von der Goltz and, by extension, German soldiery and heroism, became the subject of much unbridled admiration. This attachment to things German also tied into the sense of gratitude felt by these groups for the role Germany had played in helping Finnish volunteers earlier in the war. Germany's willingness to assist Finland at her hour of need was often contrasted by commentators with the lack of enthusiasm which had been shown by Sweden. Sweden, in fact, came to be looked upon as having virtually betrayed Finland, both by failing to provide the Whites with as much help as they had needed and by bringing unnecessary pressure to bear on Finland over the Åland Islands question at a time of national upheaval.

The period immediately following the end of the Civil War also saw the emergence of a new and negative attitude towards Britain, particularly amongst the more pro-German elements within Finnish society. The British expeditionary force's recruitment of Red troops which had fled Finland, following its landing in Murmansk, led to it being immediately labelled as pro-socialist and potentially hostile to the White authorities. Post-Civil War White opinion also reflected a pronounced shift towards an

increased hostility and suspicion of Bolshevism and everything Russian. Although in large measure only an extension of earlier non-socialist views, this antipathy, one which developed both political and moral overtones, was given added force by the persistent argument underlying much of conservative comment that the Bolsheviks had been involved in provoking the Civil War from the very start, as part of a bid to strip Finland of her independence and her social and historical heritage.[41]

Powerless and ideologically cowed after its defeat, Red opinion lacked any single common uniting factor which would have served to restore left-wing confidence. Anti-German sentiment was mixed with a vague and ill-defined attitude to the rest of Europe. The Left's overall sense of pessimism was only reinforced by the very real doubts which continued to surround the question of whether the revolution in Russia would be able to continue and expand or be turned back on itself.

4. The aftermath of the Civil War — constitutional and foreign policy debate

The end of the Civil War in May 1918 in a White victory and the withdrawal of the last Russian units remaining on Finnish soil set the seal on the severance of Finland's century-long political and constitutional links with Russia. With the replacement of Russian troops with German ones, in the shape of the expeditionary force commanded by General von der Goltz, however, Finland merely exchanged political and military dependence on Russia for dependence on Germany.

When it became clear to the Western powers that the German force intended staying in Finland, they sent a number of notes to the Finnish government to sound out the extent of Finland's apparent new status as a German satellite state. In an effort to head off a possible German attempt at gaining access to the Arctic Ocean, the British government warned the Finnish authorities in no uncertain terms, in a note sent on 24 April, that they should not

41. T. Manninen 1982, pp. 188—91; Upton II 1981, p. 459.

permit any aggressive action to be launched from Finnish territory against the British forces then operating south of Murmansk. The note also contained a list of the requirements that Finland would have to comply with before Britain would be willing to recognise her independence. France similarly made it plain to the Finnish government on a number of occasions during April that it would be impossible to establish diplomatic relations between the two countries until all German troops stationed in Finland had been evacuated. In their note of 30 April the French also demanded guarantees, along the lines proposed by Britain, that Finland would not permit or initiate any military activities across her eastern border. The Finnish response to these Western notes was in large part outlined in discussions with German diplomatic represen-tatives, who advised Finland to refuse the terms proposed. Finland's refusal was communicated to the British authorities through the intermediary of the Finnish official news agency, to avoid direct discussions on the issue.[42]

The strong shift towards conservativism which had emerged within White opinion made itself especially felt when the government turned to the question of deciding the nature of the country's future constitution. The first outlines put forward in April embraced a variety of different constitutional models based on a bicameral parliament.[43] By May, at the time of the celebrations of the White victory, opinion had swung strongly in favour of a monarchy and a style of government and political administration much closer to the German ideal.

Those behind the monarchist idea never aimed at the establishment of a modern constitutional monarchy along the lines of the Norwegian model instituted after the dissolution of the union between Sweden and Norway in 1905, but rather at the creation of a strong monarchy in the style of the old-established European monarchies. Under such an arrangement, the monarchy would be able to act as an effective counterbalance to Parliament and the challenge of radical democracy and mass parties, and thereby protect the established social system. The proposed constitution put forward by the monarchists included an absolute

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42. Paasivirta 1961, pp. 22—3.
43. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 257—62.

right of veto for the head of state on all constitutional questions and the requirement of a two-thirds parliamentary majority to reverse his veto on ordinary legislation when it was returned to the house. No real mention of the principles of parliamentary government was included. The conservative groups behind the monarchist proposal laid much of the blame for the outbreak of the Civil War at the door of the democratic developments which had taken place in Finland during 1917, which were seen as having led to the Diet gaining too much power and to an explosion of social anarchy within society. Seen in this light, the authorities had a duty to prevent the possibility of a similar situation again overtaking the country.[44] It was also hoped that by adopting a more avowedly pro-German foreign policy and by choosing a German prince as the country's future king, Finland would be able to secure German support for her expansionist aims in East Karelia.[45]

The monarchist constitution found little favour among more moderate political figures such as K. J. Ståhlberg, who came to the forefront of liberal republican opinion through his authorship of a pamphlet entitled 'Future outlooks', which appeared at the end of April. In this, Ståhlberg argued for the adoption of policies aimed at social reform and national conciliation to help heal the wounds that had been inflicted on Finnish society by the Civil War. Ståhlberg was particularly concerned to stem the atmosphere of revenge and fear which he felt had overtaken society in the aftermath of the ending of hostilities. In the eyes of Ståhlberg and his fellow like-minded republicans such as the Agrarian Party leader Santeri Alkio, the virtues of democracy and parliamentary government were undisputed, both as long-term ideals for the whole of human society and as the best basis for Finland's independent constitution. Nothing that had happened in the Civil War, as they saw things, necessitated the abandonment of these beliefs. On the contrary, the country needed a form of government acceptable to as wide a spectrum of the population as possible, and one which would be able to provide a framework for effective popular participation in politics to help rebuild and consolidate

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44. Ibid., pp. 256—7.
45. Ibid., pp. 272, 282—3; UP 27.7.1918.

Finland's internal unity and strength after the traumatic experiences of the Civil War.[46]

Liberal republican opinion was guided by the conviction that in the long term the country's external security and its ability to consolidate its new place in the world were in large part dependent on the degree of stability achieved in the country's internal affairs. The country's future security was not, however, to be achieved at the drop of a hat, it was recognised, rather it would grow out of a gradual process of national development. In contrast to the monarchists, the republicans were considerably more sanguine about the potential ability of small nations to pursue their own independent foreign policy, and about the extent of Finland's potential room for manoeuvre in her dealings with Germany. While undoubtedly aware of the major differences in the political systems of the Scandinavian and Western countries from those of the countries of Central Europe, republican supporters, conscious of their comments' possible implications beyond Finland's borders, carefully avoided drawing any significant comparisons between the two types of government which might have reflected badly against the latter. While making no attempt to unrealistically minimise the powerful position enjoyed by Germany during the spring and summer of 1918, the republicans underlined the greater resources available to the Western powers. Their monarchist opponents, in contrast, put their trust in a final German victory. Finland could not afford, the republicans argued, to put all her political eggs in one basket and had to allow room for future flexibility in her relations with the rest of Europe.

The conflict that developed between monarchist and republican opinion during the summer of 1918 was reminiscent, in its bitterness and uncompromising tones, of the bloodier struggle that had taken place the previous spring, with the difference that this time it was one waged only between the victors of the Civil War. Debate in the Diet, which began sitting again at the end of May, was handicapped by the fact that the house lacked all but one of its socialist members, some 90 out of a total of 200, making the assembly little short of a rump parliament. This gave the

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46. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 269—70; Lindman 1968, pp. 369—72; Mylly 1978, pp. 67—8; Kaleva 24.7.1918; Ilkka 24.7.1918.

monarchists an effective majority, despite their numbering under 60 members, although not a sufficiently large enough one to ensure their proposal's immediate approval. In a piece of calculated political brinkmanship aimed at bypassing the republican versus monarchist argument altogether, the monarchists pushed through a vote on Article 38 of the Act of Government of 1772 on 8 August, passed by a simple majority, allowing for the beginning of preparations for electing a monarch.

The German economic grip on Finland, which had been guaranteed by the trade agreement signed by the Vaasa government with Germany in March, had been steadily growing.[47] Finland's foreign trade had in a short period of time become increasingly concentrated on Germany and those areas of Eastern Europe extending into the Ukraine under German occupation, and become largely cut off from the rest of Europe. In response to this, Britain adopted a no-trade policy in May with what was described as German-occupied Finland, freezing Finnish assets and credits held with British banks. Sweden too adopted a cautious trading policy with Finland, partly, it is true, as a result of pressure from the West.

Germany's powerful role in the Finnish economy was also reflected in the setting-up of centralised marketing and trading organisations to handle Finland's trade with Germany. The timber and paper industry, which had already had some experience of centralising its export operations, set up The Finnish Paper Producers' Association and The Finnish Cellulose Producers' Association at the beginning of July to act as common sales organisations for the industry, alongside the already existing Finnish Pulp Producers' Association.[48] In other areas of the economy, however, there was some resistance to centralised sales organisations, as both unfamiliar and untried in Finnish conditions and largely unwanted but for the necessity of trading with Germany, and as likely to unfairly favour large companies at the expense of the interests of smaller enterprises.[49]

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47. Böhme 1973, pp. 378—93.
48. T. v. Wright 1928, p. 8; Paasivirta 1968, p. 205; Rautkallio 1977, pp. 315—8; *Kauppalehti* 3.7.1918.
49. T. v. Wright 1928, pp. 17—18.

The timber and paper industries, both with large stocks built up over the war years, had high hopes of expanding exports into the Ukraine. Two leading figures in the field, Gösta Serlachius and Rudolf Walden, travelled to the Ukraine in August to survey the local market's potential, which it was hoped would be sufficient to fill the gap left by the loss of the large Russian market. Exports to the Ukraine would also give Finland access to supplies of much-needed Ukrainian products such as sugar.[50] It was hoped in Finland that exports of timber and paper products to Germany would allow Finland to reciprocally begin imports from Germany, but this proved largely impossible in practice. Some shipments of grain, it is true, were authorised, but the continuation of the war in the West meant that Germany was unable to supply Finnish industry with the raw materials it needed, a factor which severely hindered Finland's industrial recovery after the Civil War.

The Finnish Trade and Industry Commission was forced to control the country's foreign trading relations with a firm hand and within a framework of strict rationing regulations. Rationing took a somewhat similar form to that in Sweden and Germany, although it was introduced relatively late in the day.[51] This allowed the growth of an active black market economy exploiting the shortages of food and other commodities affecting the ordinary population and exacerbating the general decline in purchasing power and inflation. Finland's difficult position in the summer of 1918 forced the business community to aim at a policy of developing national self-sufficiency in as many sectors of the economy as possible. Optimism about the future, however, at a time when Europe was entering its fifth year of war, was understandably at a low ebb.[52]

The reorganisation of the White army into a national defence force at the end of the Civil War similarly reflected the pro-German policies that had been adopted as the basis of the country's foreign policy. Mannerheim's original plans were shelved at

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50. See R. Walden's memorandum of 3.9.1918 to the Finnish Association of Paper Producers and the latter's of 20.9.1918 to Leo Ehrnrooth. Also, Henrik Ramsay's memorandum of 8.10.1918 to Leo Ehrnrooth (SMKL archive). Ahvenainen 1972, p. 76; *Kauppalehti* 31.7.1918.
51. Kauppa- ja teollisuusministeriö 1888—1938, pp. 114—5.
52. *Kauppalehti* 7.8.1918.

Svinhufvud's direction, following the latter's decision to use German staff officers to coordinate the restructuring programme. This move prompted Mannerheim to resign as commander-in-chief at the end of May and saw the appointment of the pro-German General Wilhelm Thesleff as Minister of War.

A special body of German officers under Colonel Konrad von Redern numbering 95 in all was given the task of establishing a new national army. Commandership of the new force was initially shared between a German and a Finnish officer, Colonel von Redern and Colonel N. G. Procopé, but in August this was changed to give von Redern complete control.[53] German aims focused on developing the army into a serviceable body of men capable of participating in German military operations in North-East Europe and particularly in possible joint German-Finnish action to force the British out of Murmansk.[54]

Close links with Germany were seen by both Svinhufvud, the country's acting head of state, and Paasikivi, the new Prime Minister, as forming the basis for Finland's future security and as providing the backing needed for Finnish territorial expansion into East Karelia. Svinhufvud had been a strong advocate of pro-German policies since the previous autumn, when he had come to the conclusion that only by tying Finland to Germany would the country gain both national security and a measure of protection against the threat of revolution spreading from Soviet Russia. Paasikivi's views had been shaped in large measure by his Civil War experiences. As a small, politically-isolated state with minimal military resources, Finland was in no position, in Paasikivi's view, to play a balancing act between the major wartime alliances, as Greece and Rumania had tried to do. Some form of close tie with Germany seemed to offer the best option, and the choice of a German prince, preferably a member of the Hohenzollern family, as Finland's first king the best guarantee of the future continuity of close Finnish-German relations.[55] The need to develop Anglo-Finnish relations appeared to Paasikivi to be of much less importance, although he appreciated the need to

53. Terä-Tervasmäki I 1973, pp. 40, 43.
54. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 347—8; Polvinen II 1971, 21—5.
55. Hultin: Muistiinpanoja 10.7., 4.8.1918 (Hultin collection).

avoid war between the two countries.

On the question of likely developments in the international situation, Paasikivi came to believe by the early summer that the re-establishment of Tsarist rule in Russia would only be a matter of time and that in its wake Russia's alliance with the Western powers would be restored.[56] A number of his fellow monarchists, however, supposed that following the secession of the Ukraine the Russian Empire would eventually disintegrate into a number of smaller states, while some even went so far as to suggest that Petrograd would emerge as an independent free city as part of the same disintegration process.[57]

Following the establishment of close political and economic ties between Finland and Germany, cultural links between the two countries also began to flourish anew, albeit with a more political colouring, following the lifting of the restrictions which had been imposed in the early part of the war. This new political factor also partly influenced the choice of those figures selected by the Finnish government to take part in handling bilateral cultural relations with Germany. The Germans for their part, in line with their desire to consolidate Finnish-German relations, also showed an active interest in encouraging these links, within the limits imposed by wartime conditions.

The Finnish government's decision taken in the autumn to send a large cultural delegation to Germany reflected its conviction of the importance of consolidating ties across as wide a spectrum as possible. The group included a number of pro-monarchist figures such as Professor J. J. Mikkola, the scholar K. S. Laurila and the writer V. A. Koskenniemi.[58] Finnish music by the likes of Sibelius, Palmgren, Järnefelt and Merikanto had featured prominently in Germany in the late summer in the series of concerts given by Georg Schneevoigt, the principle conductor of the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra. The Finnish singers, Hanna Granfelt and Irma Tervani, also held a number of concerts in Berlin and elsewhere in Germany.[59] Helsinki saw the visit of a number of

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56. See the minutes of the discussion between the Senate and leading non-socialist MPs dated 8.7.1918 (Eduskunnan arkisto 1917 II VP).
57. US 17.4.1919.
58. Kunnas 1976, pp. 159—60; UP 7.11.1918.
59. For coverage of the visits, see US 3.8., 9.8., 11.8., 17.8., 21.8., 25.9., 26.9.1918; Hbl 6.8., 10.8., 16.8., 31.8., 15.9.1918; SvT 17.9.1918.

German theatre and operetta companies between July and September. Plans were also mooted in the autumn for the establishment of a German theatre in the Finnish capital.[60]

The importance of Finnish-German cultural relations was also emphasised within Finland's Swedish-speaking community, which, at least in its higher echelons, was prominent in stressing Finland's deep debt of gratitude towards Germany for her role in liberating the country. The Germanic ethnic roots of the Swedish-speaking population were enthusiastically underlined, as was the Germanic spirit of the Swedish-language cultural inheritance in Finland.[61] The importance of links with Germany was paralleled to that of those with Sweden. This did not prove entirely unproblematic, however, as a number of commentators in Sweden itself proved distinctly suspicious of what they saw as the Swedish-speaking population's uncritical and headlong embrace of closer ties with Germany. This led to an underlining of Finland's role as what was described as an 'outpost of Western civilisation against the East', and an emphasis on the White victory in the Civil War as one of Western values and ideals won against the threat of Eastern barbarism.[62]

From the German perspective, Finland was necessarily seen very much in the context of Germany's overall policy towards Russia and Eastern Europe. The importance of maintaining good relations with the Soviet government following the Brest-Litovsk peace could not be ignored by German decision-makers. It was therefore no surprise that Germany proved quite willing to accede to Soviet interests in the outlining of the Soviet-Finnish border on the Karelian Isthmus to the north of Petrograd.[63]

Relatively little attention was paid by the Finnish government to the military and political potential of the Western powers, or the continuing shift in the balance of military power along the Western Front caused by the steadily growing presence of American troops alongside the French and British forces.[64] Following the Brest-

60. US 27.8.1918; Hbl 17.9.1918; UP 3.7., 10.7., 27.7., 31.7., 24.9.1918.
61. *Nya Argus* 1.5.1918.
62. *Nya Argus* 1.5., 16.5.1918; *Finsk Tidskrift* II 1918, p. 155.
63. Paasivirta 1957, p. 341.
64. Ibid., pp. 327—32; Polvinen II 1971, pp. 46—50; Kirby 1979, pp. 54—5.

Litovsk peace in the spring, Germany had been able to concentrate her military resources on the struggle in the West, but by the summer the German offensive had ground to a halt, with German troops suffering their first real setbacks at the beginning of August. It did not take long for the German High Command to realise that Germany's hopes of winning the war in the West had largely melted away, and the German government was informed on 29 September that Germany's best option lay in sueing for peace. German problems in the West were further complicated by developments in the Balkans, where the combined German and Austro-Hungarian front began to show signs of crumbling following the beginning of the British offensive from Greece into Bulgaria.[65]

By the time a new parliamentary government under Prince Max von Baden, including members from those political groups which had opposed Germany's war policy, took office on 3 October, the overall military situation in Europe was drawing close to the inevitability of an armistice and defeat for Germany and the other Central Alliance powers. This also spelt changes for Finland.[66] The Finnish decision to elect a German king, Prince Friedrich Karl of Hessen, taken on 9 October by a Diet majority of 58—44, sat uneasily with the views of some of the members of the new German government who had previously expressed their opposition to the whole monarchist idea. The climate of Finnish political opinion was also changing, rapidly making the monarchist decision virtually bankrupt before it had even been put into effect. The changes that had taken place at home and abroad would mean, as the republican paper *Helsingin Sanomat* put it, that the proposed king would ascend the Finnish throne 'not only against the wishes of the majority of the Finnish people, but also against those of the majority of the German people as well.'[67]

Problems also developed in foreign trade, with Finnish hopes of a buoyant Ukrainian market rudely dashed by the Bolshevik capture of Riga towards the end of the year, thereby breaking Finland's overland route southwards, stranding a large shipment

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65. Eyck I 1954, pp. 49—51.
66. Ibid., pp. 53—8.
67. HS 8.10.1918.

of Finnish paper before it even left the harbour for onward shipment, and preventing the supplies of Ukrainian sugar which had been negotiated as compensation payment getting through to Finland.[68]

5. The end of the war in Europe

The ending of the First World War on 11 November 1918 in an armistice requested by Germany on terms dictated by the Western powers set in train a series of political and social transformations across Europe. Over four years of continuous war had left a deep mark on the societies of all the combatant countries and caused the loss of millions of lives and severe economic disruption across the whole continent. Losses were not restricted to the defeated and were as real for the West as for Germany and her allies. The closeness of the struggle, however, meant that the Western powers and France in particular, in their bid to secure the peace and make it stick, took an uncompromising stance towards the defeated at the peace negotiations which began in Paris in January 1919.

The release of the pressures built up by the war following the armistice produced a strong political and social backlash within Germany and Austro-Hungary. The old imperial monarchies collapsed and were replaced by new political forces drawn from the Centre and the Left, both of which had been critical of wartime policies and had for some time prior to the end of hostilities advocated a negotiated peace. The leaders of these groups now rose to important positions of power and influence in the aftermath of defeat.[69]

The defeat of the Central powers also presented the minority nationalities of the region with fresh hopes and the possibility, at least in theory, of realising their ideals of independence. The Czech independence movement, acting on the initiative of its emigré leaders Tomas Masaryk and Eduard Benes, had established a Czech National Council in Paris in 1916 and attempted to forge unofficial diplomatic links with the British, French and American

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68. T. v. Wright 1928, p. 18.
69. Bracher VI 1975, pp. 19—27.

governments, in line with the movement's general leanings towards the West. Opinion in Poland on the question of the type and extent of great power support that would be necessary to guarantee the setting-up of an independent Poland had been divided and less certain of the West's ultimate victory. The hopes of those serving under Pilsudsky in Austrian Galitsia had never been especially high and were even less so after the signing of the Brest-Litovsk agreement in March 1918, which had only seemed to confirm the continuance of German military might. The Polish circles grouped around Roman Dmowski, which had been more optimistic about the West's possible success, had been encouraged by the inclusion in Article 14 of President Wilson's peace programme published in January 1918 of the aim of establishing an independent Polish state.

An independent Czech republic was declared in Prague in October 1918 in the final stages of the war. Some weeks later this was followed by the setting-up of an independent Polish republican government under Pilsudsky in Warsaw. Yugoslavia began to take shape between October and December 1918 in Serbia and the south Slav areas of Austro-Hungary.[70] All these nascent states shared a common dependency on Western political support for their future survival.

For many observers in Europe a large question mark, however, hung over the future of Russia at the end of the war. The withdrawal in November 1918 of German troops from large areas of Eastern Europe removed a major anxiety from the concerns of the Soviet government, which had been able to claim control over only a part of European Russia in addition to Petrograd and Moscow after the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Peace. Bolshevik hopes were raised yet higher by developments in Germany following the latter's declaration a republic, and plans were put in hand for a westward advance by the Red Army to expand the Soviet authorities' hold on Russian territory. The focus of Bolshevik interest turned north-eastwards to the Baltic, in line with established pre-revolutionary Russian strategy. Operations were begun in the Estonian region and further south in an attempt to open up access to central Europe and direct trade links with the

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70. Komarnicki 1957, pp. 223—66; Lederer 1963, pp. 36—53.

West. The Bolsheviks were forced to confront the newly independent states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and their liberal, agrarian and social democratic governments. Finland to the north of the Gulf of Finland, which had previously been the object of competing Russian and German ambitions, now became of minor importance in the new struggle.[71] The situation was further complicated by the fact that within Russia itself the struggle between the Soviet authorities and the various White governments receiving Western support, especially along the Empire's borders, had begun to take on major proportions.

The new tide of political and social change which swept over Europe at the end of the war was reflected in the establishment of new democratic governments in Germany and Austria, following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and that of the new independent states. Change was not restricted, however, solely to those countries which had fought in the war, but also extended to those which had managed to escape involvement. In Sweden, for example, the social democrats and liberals actively campaigned for an increased measure of reform. The new strength of radical left-wing ideologies was reflected in the revolutions such as that led by Bela Kun in Hungary, which took place in the spring of 1919.

Although post-war Europe was in many senses divided into two political camps, the victors and the defeated, in ideological terms the sharpest and most absolute division between the nations of the region ran between the new Russia under the Bolsheviks and the rest of Europe. This division was symbolised in the persons of Lenin and Woodrow Wilson, the former personifying the ideals of violent social revolution and the elimination of capitalism, and the latter, with his appeal to the notion of national self-determination, which found widespread favour with the minority nationalities of the region, representing those of a more conventionally liberal future. Wilson's call for a fair peace, however, was quickly ignored when the great powers came to decide on the future of Europe.

The split which had developed within the international labour movement between moderate and radical revolutionary opinion was strongly highlighted in immediate post-war Germany in the bitter argument which flared up between the majority under

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71. v. Rauch 1970, pp. 51—6; Paasivirta 1969, p. 21.

Friedrich Ebert, who advocated the defence of parliamentary democracy and the calling of a national assembly to resolve the constitutional basis of the new republic, and the more radical minority of the movement, which argued for building Germany's future on the basis of the workers' and soldiers' soviets established during November. The decision of Ebert's government to go ahead with elections for a national assembly provoked the spartakist minority to stage an uprising in Berlin in January 1919, which saw the death of two of the radical movement's leading figures, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, when it was put down by the authorities with the help of the army.[72] Neither conservative opinion, which still remained attached to the idea of German greatness, nor its radical counterpart, which remained convinced of its revolutionary ideals, however, proved receptive to the parliamentary constitution finally hammered out by the National Assembly. The new Austrian republic fared little better, with the deepening of the internal schism between the mildly radical social democrat-controlled labour movement and conservative Catholic opinion with its sympathies still closely associated with pre-1918 Austro-Hungary. Bela Kun's revolutionary government in Hungary managed to remain in power for some six months before collapsing and being replaced by a conservative administration headed by Horthy.[73]

6. Finland and the Western powers

The latter stages of the war, bringing with them the increasing prospect of a German defeat, had seen a significant deepening of the gulf in Finnish political life which had opened up during the earlier part of 1918 between monarchist and republican opinion, and this was only further highlighted in the wake of the German surrender. The republicans now gained added support from the Social Democrats, who had been largely inactive during the summer months in the aftermath of the Red defeat in the Civil War. The shift in international fortunes caused by the decline and final

72. Joll 1973, pp. 242—5.
73. Paasivirta II 1955, pp. 85—7, 112; Joll 1973, pp. 248—50.

collapse of German power and influence was understandably the cause of particular dismay and apprehension among the monarchists. The very foundation on which they had built their hopes of future Finnish security within Europe, and which they had seen as the ultimate guarantor of the continuity of the country's internal status quo, had simply crumbled away. There seemed little reason to doubt, in many monarchists' minds, that Finland would as a result be subject once again to the threat of renewed socialist-inspired internal unrest, coupled with a possible attack from the East.[74] This doubt about the country's chances of avoiding such a development was reinforced by what appeared to be the strength of the revolutionary movement elsewhere in Europe. With the country's internal stability seemingly under threat for the second time within a year, the reorganisation of the Civil Guard was rapidly put in hand during November and December to provide the means of resisting any unwelcome developments, the organisation having fallen into some disarray following the end of the Civil War.[75]

Republican reaction to the defeat of Germany was in many respects the complete opposite to that of the monarchists. The about-turn in the international situation provided the republicans with much cause for optimism after their months of having to play second fiddle to the monarchists. Typical of this sense of changed fortunes were the celebrations which attended the meeting of non-socialist republican leaders held on 10 November in Helsinki following the news of the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II in Germany.[76] Similar enthusiasm had also been evident among the Social Democratic leadership at a meeting held by the party in the capital slightly earlier to discuss the recent developments in Europe, and in the decision taken at a meeting on 5 November to set up a new temporary coordinating committee and issue a demand, in an attempt to upstage their non-socialist republican

74. SvT 31.10., 14.11.1918; US 14.11., 5.12.1918; Hbl 15.11.1918; *Karjala* 31.10.1918.
75. US 13.11., 19.11.1918; Hbl 12.11.1918; SvT 18.11., 30.11.1918; UP 14.11., 19.11.1918; *Karjala* 28.11.1918; *Syd-Österbotten* 13.11.1918; Hersalo II 1966, pp. 34, 39—41.
76. HS 6.11., 11.11., 12.11.1918; *Ilkka* 4.11.1918; G. Schaumann 1924, p. 240.

opponents, for the holding of new elections and the appointment of a new government.[77]

Both republican groups shared the view, in opposition to the monarchists, that no major danger faced Finland as a result of the changed international situation, but that, on the contrary, the country now had the opportunity to work towards a more broad-based consolidation of Finland's position with regard to the rest of Europe and to push forward with much-needed internal reform. Liberal republican opinion saw Finland's best option as one of genuine and 'permanent' neutrality. This was thought likely to win the most support from the West and thereby accelerate the process of Western recognition of Finnish independence, and be most attractive to the rest of Scandinavia, allowing for stronger ties in the Scandinavian region.[78] The new Social Democratic leadership also favoured neutrality as the basis of the country's future foreign policy, and stressed the importance of gaining wider Western recognition for the declaration of independence.[79]

The Social Democratic leadership believed that the ending of the war would be bound to have a positive effect on calming the situation within the country and removing the restrictions preventing the normalisation of Finnish political life. In particular, it offered the prospect of the party once again being able to challenge the artificially-maintained dominance of conservative opinion which had reigned since the end of the Civil War. The extent of socialist discontent at the unrepresentative nature of the Diet and the government was underlined in the appeal for support the party sent out to foreign social democratic parties in November, which declared in no uncertain terms that neither institution could justifiably claim the 'right to speak in the name of the Finnish people'.[80]

Events on the wider European stage also went some way towards raising morale among the grass-roots supporters of the labour movement, although this did not take any very visible outward form, with workers' organisations remaining in a virtual limbo and

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77. SS 8.10., 18.10., 6.11.1918; H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 322—4; J. Paavolainen 1979, p. 240.
78. HS 12.11., 16.11.1918; *Karjalan Aamulehti* 21.11.1918; *Ilkka* 19.10.1918.
79. H. Soikkanen 1975, p. 324; SS 19.9., 28.10.1918.
80. SS 11.11.1918.

thousands of left-wing activists still imprisoned as a consequence of the Civil War and only one left-wing newspaper, *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti*, allowed to appear and then only irregularly. Opinion within the movement as a whole ranged from modest optimism about the future to open demands for revenge against the bourgeoisie.

Change in the overall direction of Finnish politics was slow to come, however, even despite the decline in German fortunes which had began to make itself felt some time before Germany's final defeat, as a result of the close identification by conservative monarchist opinion of a pro-German foreign policy with the maintenance of the internal balance of power established after the Civil War. Any realignment of the country's foreign policy was feared likely to undermine the post-Civil War status quo and lead to further internal social instability. Conservative politicians were unwilling to make any real move until they could be sure of what the Western victory would mean in practice for Europe and until it became clear to what extent Finland would have to realign her foreign policy, and until it could best be determined how to effectively defend the country's internal political and social balance of power.

Paasikivi's government decided to use the services of General Mannerheim to sound out British and French attitudes towards Finland and to clarify Finland's possibilities for improving her relations with the Western powers. Mannerheim was also given the thorny task of enquiring whether, in the changed circumstances, the West would be willing to accept Prince Friedrich Karl becoming the Finnish King.[81] Monarchist fears were especially concentrated, with the Bulgarian example fresh in everybody's minds, on the possible negative consequences of an over-rapid Finnish disengagement from her previous pro-German policies, leaving Finland in a political no-man's land between Germany and the West.[82]

Aware of the complexities of the situation, the government came to stress the need for a greater measure of cooperation between the

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81. Paasivirta 1961, p. 108. Also see Mannerheim's letter of 19.10.1918 to Werner Söderhjelm (Söderhjelm collection).
82. Brotherus 1918, pp. 400—4; Haataja: Päiväkirja 25.10.1918.

non-socialist parties as a means of ensuring a wider base of support for policy decisions and heading off a further possible challenge from the Left. This resulted in the setting up of a seventeen-man joint committee, including representatives from the republican parties, which up until then had been effectively excluded from government decision-making, to act as a coordinating body to keep a check on developments. Negotiations were also put in hand between the parties on the question of forming a new government. Progress on this issue was initially slow. A new government, however, under Lauri Ingman, with both monarchist and republican members, was finally appointed on 27 November, some two weeks after the end of the war in Europe.

Mannerheim's visit in mid-November to London and Paris, while serving to put Finland's relations with the West on something of a new footing and one more appropriate to the changed international situation, did not, however, lead to the hoped-for Western recognition of Finnish independence which would have strengthened Finland's position in the lead-up to the Paris peace conference and extended and consolidated the country's network of diplomatic relations. Mannerheim, in fact, was only able to bring back details of the terms which the Finnish government would be required to meet before recognition could be approved.[83] These included, in addition to the evacuation of German troops from the country, the holding of new parliamentary elections and the appointment of a new government. By imposing these conditions, Britain and France hoped to be able to ensure Finland's future friendly attitude towards the West and the removal of pro-German politicians from positions of power and influence in Finnish political life.

Some more positive progress was nevertheless made on the other major issue of Finnish concern at the end of 1918, that of food aid. Finland had been included in the American food aid programme for Europe drawn up by Herbert Hoover as a country deserving some degree of assistance, although not as one of the major needy countries. Talks between Hoover and Rudolf Holsti, Finland's temporary diplomatic representative in London, led to the signing of a wide-ranging two-stage agreement on food aid shipments to

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83. Paasivirta 1961, pp. 114, 116.

Finland at the beginning of December.[84] This allowed for an initial shipment of some 11,000 tons of grain to be immediately sent to Finland by Sweden and Denmark, both of which had previously expressed their willingness to assist in the problem, to be subsequently recompensed by the United States from its own reserves. Enough, it was thought, to satisfy Finland's short-term needs for approximately a month, this was to be followed by direct aid from the United States of up to a monthly maximum of 10,000 tons of grain, 2,000 tons of pork, 1,000 tons of fat products and 1,000 tons of sugar. The Western blockade would nevertheless otherwise remain in force.

In addition to the obvious benefits this decision brought to Finland's straightened food supply situation, it also served an important role in assisting the establishment of closer working ties between Finland and the West. By deciding to grant Finland direct aid, the United States had also virtually given a de facto recognition of Finland's independent status. The Right cannot have been unaware of the tangible benefits to be gained from this aid in helping to stem further social discontent, intended as it was by its donors to help prevent instability in the newly-independent and emerging states of Europe. The unavoidability of the need to redraw the outline of Finland's foreign policy in the light of the changed international situation was ultimately recognised by the monarchist camp, although with some reluctance. Some fears remained, however, that the Western powers would attempt to interfere in Finland's internal affairs. The earlier dominance of Germany in monarchist thinking and the debt of gratitude felt towards Germany for her military assistance the previous spring were to be difficult for some to forget.

The about-turn that had taken place in Finland's international position by the end of the year was tellingly reflected in the arrival of British and French military observers in Helsinki on the final evacuation of General von der Goltz' German troops in December 1918.[85] This switch in foreign military presence was also linked to

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84. Ibid., p. 93.

85. The Western powers had agreed that Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania would be under the supervision of the British General Sir H. Gough, and Poland and Rumania under French supervision (see R. Holsti: Muistelmia/ Holsti collection). There was also a French military delegation in Finland, including General Etievant and Colonel Gentre.

the change in the balance of power which had taken place as whole in the Baltic area. In addition to their obvious task of following developments within Finland, the new Western observers were also entrusted with the job of keeping a check on military and other developments in Russia, and Petrograd in particular, and the Baltic countries. Helsinki came, as a result, to assume a new and significant military and political role in Western eyes.

7. Conflicting internal tensions

The successive crises and upheavals affecting Finnish politics during 1918 had a significant impact on reshaping the nature of the party system. Established political allegiances and party political ideas inherited from the very different conditions and political priorities existing during the period of autonomy gave way to the development of a more European style of party apparatus, with a new emphasis on conservative and liberal parties.

Awareness of the new demands imposed by recent developments and the proximity of the next elections served to accelerate the process of political regrouping which took place within the non-socialist camp.[86] The founding of the National Coalition Party at the beginning of December 1918 by a group of non-socialists who had been closely associated with monarchist policies the same summer represented an obviously defensive reaction to the new political situation, a regrouping of forces by conservative opinion in the face of the German defeat and the growing strength of the supporters of more radical parliamentary democracy. This group represented the mainstream of right-wing conservative Finnish-speaking opinion. The new party was, all the same, less of a party in the modern sense of the word and more of a loose alliance of conservative politicians based around a core of shared conservative ideals, drawing its members from three very different earlier groupings; past supporters of conciliatory policies towards the Russians, passive resistance and the volunteer movement.

The founding of the National Progressive Party, also at the beginning of December, united republican opinion, and particularly

86. Borg 1965, pp. 125—9; Y. Blomstedt 1969, pp. 371—2.

that which had previously found a home within the Young Finns, into a single party organisation. The new party also served to fill the gap which had up until then existed on the Finnish political map for a European-style liberal party, committed to the ideal of bringing the country more firmly into the European political fold. Initially, however, it was mainly identified as the party for all those who felt themselves unable to support the National Coalition Party because of their dislike of the monarchists' plan to install a foreign prince as head of state.

The nationalist Agrarian Party also enjoyed something of a renaissance. The party's self-confidence had been reinforced by the consistency of the republican policy championed by Santeri Alkio and the latter's unwillingness to compromise during the long arguments which had raged over the future constitution, and its continued ideological commitment to 'peasant democracy'.

Distinctly less optimism was evident within the ranks of the Swedish People's Party, which found itself under increased pressure. As the traditional party of the political and social élite, its sympathies were close to the heart of White ideals and the monarchist cause. The country's increasing shift towards parliamentary democracy and populist politics, and which threatened to severely undercut the party's influence, was viewed with understandable concern. This was matched by the concern felt over the possible threat to the Swedish-speaking population's position posed by the increasing dominance of Finnish speakers in politics. The party's strong conservative and monarchist leanings were evident in its violent attack during 1918 on the leading Swedish-speaking politician Georg Schauman, following his advocacy of a republican form of government. Schauman later broke away from the party to form his own independent grouping.[87]

The greatest difficulty facing the new leadership of the Social Democrats was that of overcoming the widespread resistance and suspicion felt towards the party throughout political opinion outside the Left in the aftermath of the Civil War, and of simply getting their party's opinions heard and regaining some political influence. The party found a partial ally in moderate non-socialist

87. Nordström 1946, pp. 32—9.

opinion, which saw social democracy as a useful weapon in the struggle against Bolshevism. More conservative White opinion, however, proved consistently hostile to the whole of the Left. Although many of those prominent in the new Social Democratic leadership, including Väinö Tanner, had been or continued to be closely involved in the cooperative movement and lacked any history of involvement in Red activities during the Civil War, the party and the labour movement remained closely identified with the defeated Reds. Influential White opinion automatically associated the Left with a commitment to violent mass action and to an ideology which fundamentally ran against national interests and continued to threaten the basis of society. The reformed Social Democratic Party founded in December 1918 was quick to declare its political aim as one of Western-style social democracy. While condemning all those elements within the Left identified with Bolshevist or anarchist sympathies, the party nevertheless strongly criticised the treatment meted out by the authorities to the Red prisoners under detention, and called for an extensive amnesty for all political prisoners.[88]

The parliamentary elections timed for March 1919 came as a natural conclusion to the period of transformation which had gone before, in the shape of the Civil War and the White interregnum which had followed. At the same time, because of their role as a watershed, they also generated significant political tension, being greeted with a mixture of enthusiasm, concern, doubt, fear and bitterness, depending on the political group in question. For the monarchists, the elections were to prove a difficult challenge, forcing them to come face to face with the fact of their minority status and the loss of the exceptional influence which they had been able to exert since May 1918. For republican opinion, both within the Progressive Party and the Agrarian Party, the elections held out the possibility of a significant growth in political influence and thus tended to be seen as a positive step forward. The Social Democrats entered the elections in a spirit of protest under their slogan 'A future free from oppression'.[89]

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88. H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 329—32.
89. Ibid., pp. 354—5; Mylly 1978, p. 41.

8. Towards a new foreign policy

The consolidation of Finland's international position through the acquisition of wide-scale Western recognition for the country's independence took the centre stage in Finland's attempts to develop a new style of foreign policy following her disengagement from Germany. A central part in these efforts was played by General Mannerheim in his new role as Regent, to which position he was appointed on 12 December 1918, and by Carl Enckell, the foreign minister of the new Ingman government.

The ending of the war and Finland's breakaway from her earlier pro-German policies served to ease trade between Finland and the Scandinavian countries, and allowed the dispatch of food aid from Sweden and Denmark. While the overall stabilisation of Finnish affairs and the Finnish economy was greeted with satisfaction in Sweden, being in line with Sweden's immediate general interests, there was less optimism among Swedish observers about the future of bilateral relations. There seemed the very real possibility of a long-term clash of economic interests developing between the two countries when Finland finally recovered from the after-effects of the Civil War to compete on more equal terms with Sweden on the lucrative Western market. In the short-term, Finnish-Swedish relations remained bedevilled by the Åland Islands issue.

In December 1918, the Swedish government adopted a policy aimed at the holding of a regional referendum on the Islands to decide their fate, to be conducted in cooperation with the Finnish authorities. Such a referendum would, in Stockholm's view, be bound to run in Sweden's favour.[90] Finland's apparent reluctance to make any definite move towards resolving the problem prompted the Swedish government to invite Mannerheim to Stockholm on an official visit in February 1919, in the hope of convincing Finland of the need to accelerate the pace of progress towards a solution acceptable to both sides. Discussions between the two countries' heads of state and foreign ministers, however, proved disappointing for the Swedes in the face of Mannerheim's insistence, on both political and military considerations, on the

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90. Gihl 1951, pp. 390—1; Rafael Erich: Päiväkirja 12.1.1919.

need to maintain Finnish sovereignty over the Islands.[91] While aware of the mood of Finnish public opinion on the issue, Mannerheim was most concerned that, by acceding to giving up the Islands, Finland might possibly and dangerously undermine her international position, and also ultimately harm her relationship with Sweden. Seeing that bilateral negotiations were unlikely to get anywhere, the Swedish authorities finally decided to appeal to the Paris peace conference in April 1919, in the hope of achieving a more favourable resolution to the matter.

The Swedish case in Paris gained added impetus following the refusal by the Allies of Finland's request to be allowed to send an official representative to the peace conference. Among the newly-independent states, only Czechoslovakia and Poland, both of which had openly allied themselves with the West in their moves towards independence during the war years, were allowed to be officially represented. Finland was nevertheless permitted to send observers to the Paris negotiations. Despite the previous refusal of the major Western powers to recognise Finnish independence, it soon became clear that they all considered Finland a de facto independent state, a fact reflected, albeit only indirectly, in the decision not to include Poland or Finland in the joint discussions held at the end of January between representatives from all the countries involved in the Russian question.[92] The dominance of Germany on the conference agenda, however, saw the postponement of any final decisions relating to Russia and, by extension, that of those relating to Finland and her new position.

In the case of France, Pichon, the French Foreign Minister, announced that he was willing, in principle, to grant Finland immediate recognition, a move clearly influenced by the West's plans for intervention in Russia and in which, it was supposed, Finland and Mannerheim might be able to play a useful part. The British, on the other hand, refused to abandon their earlier demands for the holding of elections and the appointment of a new government as prerequisites to British recognition. Finland's determination to adopt a new foreign policy could only be guaranteed through elections, according to this view.[93]

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91. Jägerskiöld III 1969, pp. 91—5.
92. Paasivirta 1961, p. 120.
93. Ibid., p. 124.

Mannerheim decided nevertheless to continue his efforts in late January 1919 to achieve formal Western recognition of Finnish independence, convinced as he was of the potential of such recognition to improve Finland's immediate position.[94] Western recognition also held out the prospect of strengthening Mannerheim's own personal position as Regent. Mannerheim was acutely aware of the possibility that the forthcoming parliamentary elections could result in an important change in the political balance of power within Finland, and one which could indirectly weaken his influence over the direction of Finnish policy and ability to fulfil his ambition of involving Finland in military intervention against the Bolshevik government, a move which he had tentatively supported at the end of 1918. A successful diplomatic coup resulting in Western recognition occurring just prior to the elections would therefore both strengthen Mannerheim's own hand and offer Finland some much-needed room for manoeuvre on the international scene.

The result of the March 1919 elections, which saw the Social Democrats gain a total of 80 seats, making them the largest party, probably came as something of a surprise, not only to a large section of the population, but also to many within the labour movement itself. With 42 seats from a spread of constituencies across the country, including southern Finland, the Agrarians emerged as the largest non-socialist party. The remainder of seats were divided relatively equally between the three other non-socialist parties, with the Progressives gaining 26 seats, the National Coalition 28 seats and the Swedish People's Party 22 seats. The result left foreign observers in no doubt that the balance of parliamentary support in Finland had swung decisively away from pro-German policies in favour of a more non-aligned form of foreign policy. From a domestic point of view, the control by the republican centre parties and the Social Democrats of around 150 seats in the new parliament, against the some 50 held by the monarchists, put an end to the plans to establish a Finnish royal family which had been advanced in the previous minority Diet.

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94. Ibid., pp. 123—9; Jägerskiöld III 1969, pp. 35—40. Also see Pichon's memoranda dated 30.12.1918 and 20.1.1919 (AAEF, Finlande 16), and the memorandum from the British Legation in Paris to the French Foreign Ministry dated 19.1.1919 (FO 608/187).

The republicans nevertheless did not command the five-sixths majority needed to ensure the accelerated passage and approval of a new constitution. The election result made some kind of compromise a virtual necessity, if the issue was not to be postponed until after the next elections. The shift in the balance of power in Parliament towards the centre guaranteed the moderate parties a significant role in the new government which was formed in mid-April, although the posts of Prime Minister and Defence Minister, filled by Kaarlo Castrén and Rudolf Walden respectively, remained held by men close to Mannerheim. The pro-Western Rudolf Holsti was appointed as Foreign Minister in place of Enckell.[95]

The general tone of the post-war atmosphere, both at home and in Europe as a whole, made the adoption of a monarchial system a virtual impossibility. The overall tide of development in Europe, which was clearly running in favour of parliamentary government, with the establishment of a new parliamentary constitution in republican Germany in February and Swedish moves to strip the King of his political powers, was welcomed by the Centre and the Social Democrats. Political attention on the Right, however, focused on other developments. The apparent success of Bela Kun's communist government in Hungary, the various attempts at rebellion by the extreme Left in Germany, coupled with a general fear of the spread of political and social anarchy, convinced conservative opinion in Finland of the need to maintain its call for a strong central government throughout the spring of 1919.

A draft bill for a republican constitution, based on a somewhat problematic combination of a strong presidency within a parliamentary framework, and drawing for its main inspiration on the Ståhlbergian vision of government in preference to the more parliamentary-based type of democracy advocated by the Social Democrats and elements of the Agrarian Party, was put before Parliament by Castrén's government in May. In order to be able to be sure of preventing the adoption of a monarchy, the socialists and Agrarians were forced to make some compromises with their ideals.[96] The leadership of the Swedish People's Party, in

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95. Lindman 1937, p. 45; Paasivirta 1961, p. 137.
96. Y. Blomstedt 1969, pp. 374—5; Mylly 1978, p. 68; SS 18.7.1919.

contrast, was willing to see any decision on the constitution question postponed, favouring the continuation of the Regency in the interim. Above all, they opposed any solution which would institutionalise the ideals of popular democracy and full parliamentary government.[97] It seems to have been assumed within the party that it would only be a matter of time, and perhaps only a short period of time at that, before there was a swing away from radicalism towards more traditional conservative values, both in Europe and in Finland. Such a swing, it was thought, might allow a revitalising of the plans for a monarchy, which continued to be seen within the party as the most secure form of government for the country.

In abandoning the idea of a monarchy prior to the March elections, the National Coalition Party had been forced to admit that a decisive change had taken place in the political climate in Finland, and to come to terms with the increasingly apparent fact that parliamentary democracy had come to stay in European politics. This did not prevent the Right, however, from being critical of the proposed constitution, despite the wide powers planned for the new presidency. Feeling unable to make an absolute about-turn and accept the proposal in its initial form, championed as it was by republican figures who had previously been amongst the Right's most bitter opponents, the National Coalition decided to join forces with the Swedish People's Party in opposing the accelerated passage of the bill, which led automatically to its postponement until after the next elections. The issue did not stop here, however, as the question of a future constitution was soon returned to the centre stage of parliamentary discussion on the initiative of Heikki Ritavuori. This time the government proved willing to make some concessions to the Right, including giving the future president the right to grant decorations and titles, all of which persuaded the National Coalition, although not the Swedish People's Party, to agree at the end of June to vote for the accelerated passage of the bill.[98] The continuation of the state of constitutional limbo imposed by its earlier opposition was ultimately considered by the party as likely to be prejudicial to the country's security.

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97. Hbl 24.5., 7.6., 13.6., 14.6., 15.6.1919.
98. Lindman 1968, pp. 420—1; US 17.6.1919.

Conservative opinion as a whole nevertheless continued to be divided on the constitutional question. Figures like R. A. Wrede remained convinced of the dangers to the country posed by unchecked parliamentary power, pointing to the cases of Britain, France and the Scandinavian countries as examples of the gradual decline of the power exercised by constitutional heads of state. Rafael Erich, a past fellow monarchist, in contrast, although disappointed at the abandonment of a monarchy, thought the proposal in its revised form a reasonable one.[99] Considering the overall powers proposed for the new president, Erich believed that they offered future incumbents the possibility of a real measure of independence within the political system.

Following the holding of elections in March and the appointment of a new government the next month, the West's terms for the recognition of Finnish independence had been finally met. Progress on the Russian question, under which the Finnish case also fell, had, however, been put on ice at the peace conference in Paris, to allow priority to be given to the peace treaty with Germany, which was largely agreed on in April. Finland's relatively low priority on the agenda and the difficulty of the Russian problem all pointed to the likelihood of Western recognition being postponed still longer. This prompted the Finnish authorities to attempt to persuade the Western powers to treat Finland's case separately and thereby speed up the process of recognition.

Holsti's appeal on the issue to Hoover in London resulted in a memorandum being sent to President Wilson on 26 April putting Finland's argument and emphasising the obvious benefit to Finland of as rapid a recognition as possible. Wilson's raising of the question at a meeting of the leaders of the four major Western powers in Paris saw it passed to the Council of Foreign Ministers for detailed discussion. With the West committed to an overall policy of national self-determination, the recognition of Finnish independence did not present any major difficulties for the ministers. Following the recognition of Poland and Czechoslovakia and their being allowed to take part in the Paris conference, it would have been difficult to justify refusal of de jure recognition of

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99. US 13.6.1919.

Finnish independence when it had been declared as far back as December 1917. Neither was it possible for the West to ignore the fact of the country's established national and political identity, or the Finnish government's obvious determination to break with the country's short-lived pro-German foreign policy. It did not take long, therefore, for the Council of Ministers to decide to recognise Finnish independence, and the decision was announced on 3 May.[100]

Having succeeded in gaining official Western recognition for Finnish independence and thereby consolidated the country's international position with regard to the West, the government was then left with the problem of resolving Finland's foreign and security policy towards Soviet Russia. Attitudes towards the Bolshevik government and the future of Soviet-Finnish relations varied widely across the political spectrum, ranging from the hostility of Mannerheim and the Right through the less extreme reactions of the Centre to the more positive approach adopted by the Social Democrats.

By the early spring of 1919, two main policy options had begun to dominate conservative thinking on the question. The first of these emphasised Finland's ethnic ties with related Finno-Ugrian populations across the border and advocated the annexation of East Karelia, while the second argued for Finnish participation in Western intervention against Petrograd.

The ethnic argument had its roots in the linguistic and cultural interest in East Karelia which had flourished since the mid-nineteenth century, and in the strong nationalist sentiment which had been moulded by the events surrounding independence and the Civil War. A number of organisations had emerged by the spring of 1919 devoted to organising, masterminding or otherwise supporting an active Finnish involvement across the border in Karelia. In terms of political backing, this nascent movement could count on the support of the wartime volunteers, the Civil Guard and, among the established political parties, the Agrarians.[101]

The background to the interventionist argument, in contrast, was

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100. Paasivirta 1961, pp 142—53.
101. Jääskeläinen 1961, pp. 206—10; Mylly 1978, pp. 87—9.

largely international rather than national and linked to the wider Western and White Russian struggle against Bolshevism. Scattered White Russian armies under Admiral Kolchak in Siberia, General Denikin in the Crimea and the Ukraine, and General Yudenich in the Estonian area, had begun an active campaign against the Soviet authorities and the Red Army from early 1919. The thinking behind interventionism shared a number of ideological similarities, and the same fear of the potential spread of international revolution, with the political ideas close to the heart of White opinion. Mannerheim's authority and personal influence within non-socialist opinion served to give the policy wide favour beyond the hard core of ex-Imperial Army officers, activists and right-wing political figures which made up its main supporters.[102] Both expansionist and interventionist arguments were predicated on a belief in the essential weakness of post-revolutionary Russia and its lack of internal unity. The advocates of both policies remained consistently committed to this basic interpretation, despite the fluid nature of the situation within Russia and the often conflicting reports coming out of the country.

An attack by a force of volunteers, including a number of those who had taken part in the struggle against the Bolsheviks in Estonia, was made across the Finnish-Russian border into Olonets Karelia in April 1919. Equipped and funded by the Finnish government, this volunteer action quickly assumed something of the status of a semi-official attack against the Bolsheviks on the part of the Finnish authorities. The expedition was based on two major political assumptions, the first of these being that the local population in the region supported annexation of the area to Finland proper, and the second that the Western powers would approve the Finnish move, directed as it was at territory under Bolshevik control and not at that further north within the British sphere of influence extending southwards into Archangel Karelia from the bridgehead in Murmansk. Public opinion in the area, in fact, turned out to be much less unanimously in favour of the Finnish move, with only a relatively small proportion of local people supporting unification with Finland, some openly or

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102. For the background to the intervention question, see Footman 1961, pp. 192, 304; Paasivirta 1961, pp. 207—10; Polvinen II 1971, 97—106. See also Kai Donner's letter of 22.5.1919 to Eino Suolahti (Eino Suolahti collection).

secretly supporting the Bolsheviks, and a large percentage preferring political non-involvement, suspicious that the region was being used as a pawn in a larger power struggle. The whole Olonets campaign was condemned by the Western governments at the Paris peace conference as comparable to the territorial expansion pursued by a number of newly-established states in Central Europe, aimed at pre-empting conference decisions on future European borders. The Finnish government made some effort to counter this view that the conference was being presented with a territorial fait accompli in Karelia by issuing a communiqué to the British and French governments on 9 May indicating Finland's willingness to respect the conference's final decision on the course of the country's eastern border.[103]

Finland's Foreign Minister, Rudolf Holsti, was one of the few figures in the government to support the idea of working towards a diplomatic rather than a military solution to the question of transferring East Karelia to Finnish sovereignty, as he was confident that Britain, at least, would react favourably to the idea. His advocacy of this option, however, both in April and later in the summer, failed to win any wide support within the government.[104] From a military point of view, the Olonets expedition proved a major failure, with Finnish forces suffering a number of reverses and other setbacks after their initial successes. The successful attack mounted by Soviet forces along the River Tuulosjoki at the end of June marked a decisive turning-point in the operation, and by August the majority of Finnish troops had withdrawn back across the border, retaining continued control over only two border communities, Repola and Porajärvi.[105]

Much of the Finnish enthusiasm for intervention in Russia typical of the spring of 1919 was linked to the early success of White Russian and other forces, the West's apparent determination to press ahead with further moves, and the possibility of aid being

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103. Paasivirta 1961, pp. 201—2; Jääskeläinen 1961, p. 227; Polvinen II 1971, pp. 167—8, 175; Mylly 1978, pp. 90—3; UM:n tilannekatsaus 4.4.1919 (UM 5 C 1).
104. Paasivirta 1961, p. 204; K. Castrén: Päiväkirja 16.7.1919; Enckell: Anteckningar 15.7., 16.7.1919 (UM 5 C 6). See also Holsti's telegram dated 14.7.1919 to the Paris Legation (Holsti collection XXIV).
105. Jääskeläinen 1961, pp. 232—3, 256; Talvela I 1976, pp. 39—41; v. Hertzen 1921, pp. 79—86.

granted to Finland should she agree to participate. The only real cloud on the horizon appeared to be the ambiguity of White Russian attitudes towards Finland's new position.

Mannerheim's attitude towards Russia had remained somewhat vague at the time of his appointment as Regent, although his hostility towards the Bolsheviks was well-known. His much-publicised speech made during the Civil War at Antrea on the Karelian Isthmus in March 1918, although referring to his determination to push back what he described as 'Lenin's soldiers' into East Karelia and beyond, had not made any direct demands for the annexation of Karelia. The revolution had affected Mannerheim, an officer who had achieved high rank in the Imperial Army, deeply and had led him to look upon the future very much in terms of a deepening international struggle between the forces of social revolution and those of social continuity and stability, and one bypassing the more traditional conflict between political or national states. As a soldier of 28 years standing in the Imperial Army and now at the centre of the political and military stage in Finland, Mannerheim cannot have been averse to the idea of participating in this historic struggle. Mannerheim saw Russia's and Finland's separate fates as to a large extent inextricably intertwined.[106]

Possible Finnish participation in White Russian operations and particularly those against Petrograd begged the question, however, of to what extent anti-Bolshevik sentiment had displaced the more generally disseminated anti-Russian sentiment which had developed earlier, particularly in response to Russian moves against Finnish autonomy in the post-1899 period. Intervention found its most active supporters on the political Right, while the centre parties, including the Agrarians, tended to stress the primacy of guaranteeing Finnish security and territorial inviolability. While feeling some sympathy towards Finnish involvement in East Karelia, the latter argued against involving the country in the power struggle developing between the Bolsheviks and White Russians.

A similar ambiguity towards the Russian question was evident in

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106. Heinrichs I 1957, pp. 354—6; Paasivirta 1961, pp. 226—8; Jägerskiöld III 1969, pp. 152—63.

the attitude of the moderate paper *Helsingin Sanomat*. The threat to Finnish security, particularly along the Karelian Isthmus, posed by the continued insecure position of the Soviet government was underlined during the spring of 1919. The paper's strong ideological opposition to the Bolsheviks was nevertheless matched to a lesser extent by its suspicions over White Russian intentions; both sides had to be considered as threats to Finland's security, it was stressed.[107] The paper's condemnation of Finnish military involvement in East Karelia and advocacy of a negotiated transference of sovereignty for the region, echoing the style of argument put forward by Rudolf Holsti, did not, however, prevent it coming out in support of the Olonets expedition, which it defended as a voluntary operation assisting Finland's ethnic cousins across the border.[108] Hopes appear to have been focused on the possibility of events leading to a withdrawal of both Bolshevik and White Russian forces from the Olonets area, leaving the decision over the region's future to the local population. The attitude of the Agrarians to the White Russians was more hostile. They too also came out in strong support of the Olonets campaign, which was seen as part of a wide programme aimed at uniting Finland's ethnic territories.[109]

The Social Democrats, in contrast, made no pretence of their opposition both to possible Finnish participation in intervention and to the Olonets expedition, refusing to accept Castrén's interpretation of the latter as not being an invasion of Russian territory in the conventional sense. Instead of military adventures, the Social Democrats called for rapid peace negotiations between Finland and Russia as the best means to put relations between the two countries on a sound footing. Any Finnish military presence on Russian soil was only likely to have the effect of antagonising Russian attitudes towards Finland, a development which might prove fateful for the country's future position, as and when conditions in Russia stabilised, the party argued.[110] Despite the

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107. HS 10.4., 11.4., 28.5.1919; *Karjalan Aamulehti* 13.7.1919.
108. HS 1.5.1919.
109. Mylly 1978, pp. 88—92. Also see Alkio's speech in Parliament on 11.4.1919 (VP 1919 ptk., pp. 56—7).
110. SS 21.3., 26.3., 27.3., 7.4., 3.5.1919; VP 1919 ptk., pp. 105, 193. Also see the speeches made in Parliament by Anton Kotonen and J. W. Keto on 29.4.1919 (VP 1919 ptk., pp. 105, 193).

party's overall opposition to military actions against Russia for whatever reason, there was nevertheless perhaps some support among a few of its leading figures for efforts directed at ensuring the transference of East Karelia, or a part of the region, to Finland by peaceful means, such as a local referendum.[111]

The Social Democrats underlined the fact that, of all the political groups within Russia, it was the Soviet government which had accepted and recognised Finnish independence, a move which the White Russians showed little sign of doing in contrast. Finland's best policy with regard to her relations with Russia lay, as the socialist saw things, in the adoption of neutrality. The Bolshevik attack against Estonia was nevertheless roundly condemned, and it was stressed that if a similar move was made against Finland it would have to be repelled at all costs. The socialists were keen to keep the two questions of Finnish-Russian relations and Bolshevism as far apart as possible. The latter was criticised as a dangerous ideology committed to violent revolution and the undemocratic notion of the dictatorship of the minority. Bolshevism had to be considered, in the eyes of the Finnish socialists, as a purely Russian development, an experiment which had to be allowed to work itself out without the benefit of foreign interference.[112]

The question of possible Finnish participation in intervention gained added momentum during May, following the defeat of General Yudenich's forces in their attempted attack on Petrograd from the South-West. Mannerheim and Yudenich discussed the possibility of a joint Finnish-White Russian pincer offensive against Petrograd in June. Aware of the growth of Finnish resistance to any such move, caused by the clear opposition of the emigré White Russian leadership in Paris to the West's decision to recognise Finnish independence, Mannerheim tried to convince Yudenich of the need for a more favourable White Russian attitude towards Finland's new status, if there was to be any chance of the two countries cooperating militarily. No military campaign which held out the possibility of negating Finland's achievement in

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111. See the speeches made by Wäinö Wuolijoki, J. W. Keto and Hannes Ryömä on 11.4. and 29.4.1919. (VP 1919 ptk., pp. 64, 68, 72—3, 185). SS 15.5.1919.
112. SS 10.3., 22.5., 6.6., 10.6.1919.

gaining Western recognition for her independence, Mannerheim stressed, was likely to win much support in any section of Finnish society. The two men were able to reach a private understanding by the end of June on a proposed agreement for Finnish-White Russian cooperation. This included recognition for Finnish independence, the granting of the right of regional self-determination to Archangel and Olonets Karelia, and the naming of Mannerheim as the future commander-in-chief of combined operations against Petrograd.

Mannerheim was supported in these negotiations by the Prime Minister, Castrén, Leo Ehrnrooth, the acting Foreign Minister, and Rudolf Walden, the Minister of War, but strongly opposed by the major centre party politicians Santeri Alkio and Mikael Soininen, who both demanded that all contacts with the White Russians be broken off. Holsti's return from London at the end of June to take up his new post as Foreign Minister strengthened the hand of those opposed to any involvement with Yudenich, or any development in the country's foreign policy likely to undermine Finland's standing in Western opinion.[113]

Britain's attitude towards possible Finnish participation in intervention in Russia was somewhat reserved, as reflected in the attitude of the British military representative in Helsinki, General Gough, and the British authorities' disinclination to offer Finland any military aid or include Finnish forces in their plans. British concern focused in part on the potential problems that would ensue in relations between a Russia under White government and an independent Finland, subsequent to the possible collapse of the Bolsheviks.[114] France was the sole Western power to encourage Finnish participation in joint operations against the Soviet government. Marshal Foch saw Finnish forces as offering a useful addition to interventionist plans in the area to the west of Petrograd. His request to the French General Staff to consider limited transfers of arms and other equipment to Finland to assist

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113. Paasivirta 1961, p. 232, 235; Polvinen II 1971, p. 209; *The Times* 12.5.1919; UM:n tilannekatsaus 12.6.1919 (UM 5 C 1); Alkio: Päiväkirja 15.6.1919; Kaarlo Castrén: Päiväkirja 12.6.1919.

114. See General Gough's report dated 7.6.1919 to the Foreign Office (FO 371/3438). Also Balfour's memorandum of 19.6.1919 to Lord Curzon (FO 371/3438). Kirby 1979, p. 60.

in strengthening Finnish military potential was agreed to, and a number of tanks were dispatched to Finland, although no economic assistance proved forthcoming.[115]

In his discussions with General Kolchak, Mannerheim failed, however, to secure any wider agreement to the provisional treaty worked out with Yudenich on future cooperation between Finnish and White Russian troops. Kolchak, in fact, refused to go any further than recognising Finland's separate political status, stressing that there could be no question of accepting any modification of Russia's pre-revolutionary borders, and therefore of recognising Finnish independence, until the calling of Russia's National Assembly, which had sole responsibility for legislation on constitutional matters.[116] Kolchak's real resistance to the agreement, however, lay in his inability or unwillingness to accept the possibility that Finland, a country that throughout the nineteenth century had been a part of the Russian Empire, might play a potentially decisive role in the liberation of Petrograd from Bolshevik control. His aim throughout was for a White victory with the minimum of concessions to his forces' non-Russian allies.

A more positive attitude towards Finland possibly participating in intervention in Russia became apparent among right-wing politicians and activist opinion from the early summer onwards. *Uusi Suomi*, together with a number of other papers close to the National Coalition Party, made great play of various border incidents which took place on the Karelian Isthmus during June and July, hinting more than a little obliquely that an attack by the Red Army against Finland, as part of an effort to impose a Bolshevik dictatorship, was in the offing. The same papers were not slow to criticise the cautious policies pursued by the centre parties. Although they claimed not to be blind to the question mark hanging over the ultimate aims and attitudes of the White Russians towards Finland, those on the Right stressed the long-term benefits Finland would gain from such an alliance.[117]

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115. See Marshal Foch's memorandum of 24.5.1919 to the French War Ministry (SHAF 7 N 2069) and the latter's telegrams of 1.6., 2.6. and 7.6.1919 to the Finnish War Ministry (SHAF 7 N 2069).
116. Paasivirta 1961, pp. 233—8.
117. US 20.6., 21.6., 5.7., 13.7., 20.7., 23.7., 24.7., 1919.

Removing the Bolsheviks from control in Petrograd was also high on the priorities of the leadership of the Swedish People's Party, as such a move was seen as likely to contribute in no small measure to eliminating the threat of a renewed revolution in Finland. Comment in *Hufvudstadsbladet* during June, pointing to the possibility of an imminent attack by the Red Army, closely echoed that in *Uusi Suomi*. Finnish participation in intervention would be a powerful trump card in Finland's favour, according to the paper, in the event of a White victory, although it was admitted that such a victory would also bring some dispute over the question of Finland's future independence. *Wasabladet*, a leading voice of Swedish-speaking opinion in southern Ostrobothnia, in contrast, however, advised caution with regard to making any agreements with the White Russians or participating in intervention.[118]

Finnish policy towards Russia by July 1919, therefore, was very much at a crossroads, but with opinion favouring some form of alliance with the White Russians in the ascendant. The sharply-worded note on the border incidents along the Karelian Isthmus sent by Ehrnrooth, the acting Foreign Minister, in early June to the Russian Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Tchitcherin, made no attempt to disguise Finland's readiness to attack Russia if the threats continued.[119]

With his personal commitment to intervention, Mannerheim found the government's caution and unwillingness to commit itself particularly frustrating. Supported by a group of like-minded activists, he made a dramatic secret appeal to the leaders of the National Coalition Party in mid-July, asking for the party's participation in a new government more in line with his own views and committed to initiating military operations against Petrograd. The plan called for Mannerheim's first approving the proposed new constitution and then dissolving Parliament and calling new elections. The gap that would ensue between the latter and the appointment of a new administration would allow the setting-up of a temporary government which would empower

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118. Hbl 1.7., 4.7., 5.7., 12.7.1919; Wbl 22.6., 1.7., 6.7.1919.
119. Jääskeläinen 1961, p. 235; Polvinen II 1971, pp. 195—9.
120. Paasivirta 1961, pp. 239—41; Jägerskiöld III 1969, pp. 228—34.

Mannerheim to begin operations against Petrograd.[120] The plan as a whole was based on the assumption that a successful attack on Petrograd would meet with widespread public approval and thereby act as an unspoken vote of confidence in Mannerheim, and strengthen his chances of being later elected president. The National Coalition leadership's decision to decline any part in what was seen as an unnecessarily reckless scheme caused the temporary shelving of any Finnish intervention.

The choice of K. J. Ståhlberg as Finland's first President at the end of July, by a majority of moderate and socialist votes (143—50), resulted in the unusual situation of the main architect behind the country's new republican constitution becoming the first head of state to test it in practice. Ståhlberg had made his political reputation as a republican liberal on largely domestic issues. He was also identified with the opposition to Finnish involvement in intervention, and his appointment reflected the strength of this body of opinion.

Ståhlberg was particularly committed to the ideal of the small nation state, and he was encouraged by the emergence of newly-independent states in Europe, which he interpreted as a significant step forward in European political development. As a liberal, Ståhlberg was also one of those who put much faith in the League of Nations as a positive factor in redressing the balance of political influence in international politics and in reducing the overall level of international tension and defusing conflicts before they got out of hand. Expansionist policies of the type focused on East Karelia, and the general sympathy for Finland's ethnic connections typical of the Right, found little place in Ståhlberg's thinking. Finland's relations with Russia had to be seen, in Ståhlberg's view, regardless of what the Bolshevik government might stand for in ideological terms, in the light of the inevitable balance of power existing between small and major powers. Ståhlberg's view reflected a belief in the overall continuity of Finnish foreign relations. Nothing had changed in the international situation, as he saw things, to allow Finland to ignore the importance of her relations with the East or with other major countries.[121] Ståhlberg's

121. For Ståhlberg's views, see his speeches of the period. K. Kauppi 29.5.1956.

central aim, as reflected in the editorial comment to be found in the pages of *Helsingin Sanomat,* a paper close to the republican camp, was one of creating an independent foreign policy for Finland free of unnecessary and unwanted restrictive agreements with any of the major powers. Commentators writing for *Helsingin Sanomat* stressed the fact of Finland's special geographical position and the need for the country to opt for a policy of complete neutrality. The heads of state of small countries would nevertheless be wise to remember, the paper argued, that the principles of fair play and equality of treatment, close to the hearts of all liberals, were seldom adhered to in the harsh world of international relations. Friendly links with neighbouring countries should be a *sine qua non* in the foreign policy thinking of all small states, but only, however, as long as they were not allowed to damage important national interests, which had to take precedence. On the question of Finnish expansion into East Karelia, *Helsingin Sanomat* took a decidedly cool attitude.[122]

Ståhlberg appears to have concluded that Finland was best advised to adopt an undramatic and cautious style of foreign policy similar to his moderate approach to domestic policies. He was careful, nonetheless, not to underestimate the strength of pro-intervention opinion in the army and the Civil Guards and the group centred around Mannerheim, and its potential to influence popular opinion.

A number of those who had opposed Ståhlberg's choice as President, embittered by the defeat of their monarchist plans, remained dissatisfied with the parliamentary nature of the new constitution and tended to look upon the period following Ståhlberg's election as something of an interregnum. The choice of a moderate republican such as Ståhlberg particularly irked them; Mannerheim's election as President in his stead would have been much more to their liking. The prominent activist Kai Donner summed up the group's hostility to the moderate policies represented by Ståhlberg and supported by the centre parties and the Social Democrats in his description in the right-wing magazine *Suunta* of the election as amounting to little less than 'the funeral

122. HS 22.8.1919.
123. *Suunta* 9.8.1919.

of White Finland'.[123] Opposition among the officer corps to Ståhlberg's election proved so strong that General K. E. Kivekäs, the acting Commander-in-Chief, was forced to publicly warn army officers against involving themselves in politics, describing the politically-motivated resignation requests he had received from a number of officers as indicative of 'ill-discipline and a lack of patriotism'.[124]

Despite his failure to win election as President, Mannerheim did not entirely withdraw from an active role in foreign policy issues. His reaction to plans to appoint him head of the armed forces was typically forthright when he declared that his acceptance would be dependent on his being allowed sole decision-making power on the future use of Finnish army units in actions in the East. This demand for the right to act independently of both the government of the day and the President was not unsurprisingly rejected by Ståhlberg.[125]

Given Mannerheim's obvious antipathy to him and apparent unwillingness to accept the political status quo, Ståhlberg was forced on to the defensive to secure his policies. Mannerheim's interest and involvement in the Russian question remained largely undiminished, and he maintained personal links with the official representatives of the Western powers stationed in Helsinki and kept them informed of his views on international developments throughout the autumn of 1919.[126] His deep distrust of Ståhlberg's foreign and domestic policies, and of those of the centre parties supporting him, received public prominence in an address he made to the Civil Guards at the beginning of August. 'The struggle

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124. See General K. E. Kivekäs' order of the day. Also US 26.7.1919; Hirvikallio 1958, pp. 16—17.
125. See Ståhlberg's telegram dated 28.7.1919 to Mannerheim and the latter's reply of 30.7.1919. Also, Ståhlberg's letter of 31.7.1919 to Mannerheim (Mannerheim collection) and Mannerheim's letter of 8.8.1919 to K. Castrén. Castrén: Päiväkirja 28.7.—30.7.1919 (Castrén collection); Jägerskiöld III 1969, pp. 282—5. For subsequent press comment, see US 15.8.1919; HS 16.8.1919; US 17.8.1919; Hbl 13.9., 17.9.1919; SvT 9.9.1919.
126. See the French military delegation's telegram dated 25.8.1919 sent from Helsinki to the War Ministry in Paris (SHAF 6 N 144), and Colonel Gendre's report of 28.8.1919 to the War Ministry (SHAF 6 N 143). Also see the telegram dated 21.9.1919 sent by the French envoy in Stockholm, Delavaud, to the War Ministry in Paris (SHAF 7 N 2069), and the communication dated 2.8.1919 sent by the Swedish envoy in Helsinki to Stockholm (UD 1 O 34).

for liberation,' he declared, 'has yet to be concluded as long as our achievements remain insecure.' He described the government's conciliatory domestic policies, and particularly the granting of pardons to Red prisoners, as representing a serious danger to Finland's future and as likely to contribute to a possible outbreak of a second rebellion.[127]

Together with General Hannes Ignatius, who had earlier resigned as Chief of the General Staff, Mannerheim travelled to France and Britain in mid-September to sound out the state of Western opinion with regard to Finland and particularly on the question of intervention. Events in June and July had led Mannerheim to suppose that, while Britain opposed his interventionist plans, France continued to be favourably inclined.[128] By virtue of his military and political standing, Mannerheim gained relatively easy access to Western leaders and was able to meet both Clémenceau, the French Prime Minister, and Marshal Foch in Paris, as well as establish contact with the leading figures of the Russian emigré community.

Mannerheim's continued commitment to the possibility of Finnish participation in intervention, which he saw as part of the long-term solution of the Russian problem, was further underlined in an interview with Mannerheim published on both sides of the Channel in *Le Temps* and *The Times* on 7 October. Finland's participation in the 'freeing' of Petrograd would create a firm base for the country's future relations with a White-administered Russia, Mannerheim argued. The overall tone of Mannerheim's comments gave the impression that his policies were supported by a significant proportion of the Finnish population. He did not hide his hope that the Western powers would soon give the go-ahead for the beginning of interventionist operations. Throughout the interview, Mannerheim avoided all mention of Ståhlberg and the new moderate Vennola government, although he did indirectly admit that they enjoyed the support of the majority of the electorate. Western agreement in principle to Finnish intervention, Mannerheim explained, was all that would be needed for

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127. US 3.8., 16.9.1919.
128. See Colonel Gendre's reports dated 20.6. and 28.8.1919 to the French War Ministry (SHAF 6 N 143).

what he described as the 'far-sighted elements in Finland' to begin plans for an operation that would benefit not only Finland but Russia and Western civilisation as a whole.[129]

International developments as a whole, and Finland's relations with the Soviet Union in particular, continued to be the subject of widespread and sometimes fierce political debate within Finland throughout the autumn of 1919. Further impetus to the discussion was provided in mid-September by the Soviet government's proposal for the start of peace negotiations between Russia and Finland and the three Baltic republics. Overall reaction to the idea of beginning peace negotiations with Soviet Russia were generally mixed during September and October. The government favoured a policy of wait and see, and carefully refrained from giving any direct support to the interventionist plans in the air at the time. The government's obvious reluctance, however, to voluntarily enter into any negotiations with the Soviet authorities was made clear in a statement on the matter made by Vennola, the Prime Minister, to Parliament on 16 October, in which he expressed the government's hope that all the border states would act as one in their relations with Russia. Holsti attempted to mobilise Western support to back up Finnish policy on this issue.[130]

The Progressive Party adopted an essentially cautious attitude to the prospect of peace negotiations. There was a fear within the party, however, as expressed in *Helsingin Sanomat*, that Finland could easily become isolated in its dealings with Russia, and closer links with both the border states and Britain were considered important to counteract this danger. There was nevertheless a strong desire not to allow Finland's wish for some form of common front with the Baltic republics to obscure the nature of Finland's special position. The Agrarians shared a broadly similar approach to the Progressives, albeit with a slightly stronger emphasis on a more independent attitude towards the West.[131]

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129. *Le Temps* and *The Times* 7.10.1919. See also *Daily Telegraph* 7.10.1919. Mannerheim I 1951, pp. 444—5.
130. See Vennola's speech on 16.10.1919 (VP 1919 ptk., p. 1100). K. Holsti 1963, pp. 102, 106.
131. HS 18.9., 5.10.1919; *Karjalan Aamulehti* 19.9.1919; Mylly 1978, pp. 102—5. See also the speeches made by Antti Juutilainen and A. Pitkänen on 31.10.1919 (VP 1919 ptk., p. 1354).

The Right, in contrast, strongly rejected the whole idea of Finland, or any of the other border states, starting peace negotiations with the Bolshevik authorities. Intervention remained close to the heart of conservative opinion. Contact with the Soviet government was ruled out on ideological grounds, as any return to normal relations, together with the reopening of the Finnish-Russian border, was seen as likely to open the door to Bolshevik infiltration of Finnish society and encourage the possibility of a new left-wing rebellion sweeping the country. In the event that Finland had no option but to begin negotiations at some later date, it was hoped that these could take place in London or Paris with the help of Western mediation.[132]

Strong hostility towards the Bolsheviks was also evident in the public statements arguing against the beginning of peace negotiations emanating from the Swedish People's Party. Hjalmar Procopé, speaking in Parliament, expressed a general party fear that Finland's foreign policy was increasingly drifting away from the type of initiative advocated by Mannerheim. Procopé suggested that this had also been the main cause behind what he saw as the clear drop in Western respect for Finnish policy which had taken place in the period following Ståhlberg's election as President. Erik Hornborg, another leading figure within the party, argued that beginning peace negotiations would be tantamount to betrayal of the West. This view was echoed by Ernst Estlander, who described Finland's good name, which had already suffered badly, he believed, as a result of the government's decisions to grant amnesties to Red prisoners, as bound to be finally lost in Western eyes should negotiations be allowed to go ahead.[133]

In virtual complete contrast to the opinion common among the non-socialist parties, the Social Democrats came out in support of negotiations, declaring that on this issue Finland should be willing to act in her own interest, without regard to possible Western opposition. This meant a break with their support for the Vennola government, which they had largely backed on domestic issues. As discussion on the subject in the press and Parliament became

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132. US 18.9., 4.10.1919. See also the speeches made by Artturi Wirkkunen and Hugo Suolahti on 16.10.1919 (VP 1919 ptk., pp. 1102—4, 1112).
133. Hbl 5.10.1919. Also, the speeches made by Hjalmar Procopé, Ernst Estlander and Eirik Hornborg on 30.10.1919 (VP 1919 ptk., pp. 1335—41, 1345—6).

increasingly fierce, the Social Democrats were nevertheless forced to reiterate their opposition to the Bolsheviks as representatives of a minority dictatorship and advocates of violent revolution. It was pointless in the socialists' view, however, to try and ignore the Bolsheviks indefinitely. It was generally assumed among socialist opinion that a successful White campaign in Russia would automatically lead to a period of 'White terror' and possible widespread loss of life. The events surrounding the fall of Bela Kun in Hungary in the summer of 1919 and the seizure of power by Admiral Horthy were interpreted as clear warning of these dangers.[134]

Discussion on the problems facing the country's foreign policy gained renewed impetus towards the end of October, following the initial success of a new White Russian attack against Petrograd led by General Yudenich in mid-October. The attitude of the government to this new development was initially cautious. Rumours quickly spread about changes in Western attitudes to the whole issue of intervention. Discussion tended, in large measure, to polarise around the policy options provided by Ståhlberg and Mannerheim. *Uusi Suomi*, in predicting that continuation of the policies advocated by Ståhlberg would inevitably prove fateful for Finland, called for the appointment of a new pro-interventionist government which would more fully reflect White opinion and be willing to reform the army leadership. *Hufvudstadsbladet*, the country's major Swedish-language conservative paper, in contrast, reacted rather more cautiously to the idea of Finnish participation in military operations against Petrograd.[135] *Helsingin Sanomat*, *Ilkka* and *Sosialidemokraatti* all argued strongly against any form of intervention. The latter claimed that participation in any interventionist operations would, in any case, only serve as a prelude to a White coup d'état in Finland. The paper directed the main butt of its attack against Mannerheim, labelling him as a military and political adventurist.[136]

Mannerheim's advocacy of intervention assumed more public

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134. SS 17.9., 19.9., 24.9.1919. See the speeches of Anton Kotonen and J. W. Keto made on 16.10.1919 (VP 1919 ptk., pp. 1104—1110).
135. US 17.10., 23.10., 25.10.1919; Hbl 14.10., 16.10.1919.
136. HS 4.9., 8.10., 28.10.1919; *Karjalan Aamulehti* 14.10., 24.10.1919; SS 10.9., 24.10.1919.

and prominent proportions at the beginning of November, with the publication in Helsinki of an open letter of his from Paris addressed to Ståhlberg. By allowing publication of the letter, Mannerheim hoped to be able to appeal directly to Finnish public opinion to win a wider measure of support for his policies. In this dramatically-worded appeal, he argued that the fall of Soviet power would only be a matter of time and that Western Europe looked to Finland to act against the Bolsheviks in Petrograd. Finland's refusal to assist in the capture of Petrograd would, in Mannerheim's eyes, inevitably result in what he called 'unpredictable difficulties' in future relations between Finland and White Russia.[137]

Open support for Mannerheim's new public proposal was restricted to the Right, and within the press, to *Uusi Suomi, Iltalehti* and *Hufvudstadsbladet*. Underlining its defence of direct Finnish action against Petrograd, *Uusi Suomi* stressed the importance to Finland of establishing and maintaining good relations with the White Russians. Finland should also be willing to recognise White Russia's strategic defence interests with regard to the Finnish area, the paper argued, by providing White leaders with 'firm guarantees that Finland will resist all attempts, persuasive or backed by force, to use her territory as a base for any land or sea-borne attack against Russia.' A guarantee of this sort would, in the paper's opinion, remove any obstacles to White Russian recognition of Finnish independence. *Iltalehti*, with its activist background, stressed the ideological aspects of the question and the importance of a militarily and politically strong Finland, able and willing to act against Petrograd if the situation required.[138] *Hufvudstadsbladet*, despite its earlier cautionary attitude towards intervention, now came out in open support of Mannerheim's appeal, which was described as meriting serious attention in the changed political climate. The centre parties, in government with tacit socialist support, were warned that they would be taking a possibly dangerous step if they refused to support some form of intervention.[139]

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137. Heinrichs I 1957, pp. 354—6; Jägerskiöld III 1969, pp. 333—7; US 2.11.1919. See also Mannerheim's communication from Paris dated 28.10.1919 to Lauri Ingman and the latter's reply dated 30.10.1919 (Ingman collection B 5:2).
138. US 5.11., 9.11.1919; *Iltalehti* 25.10.1919.
139. Hbl 26.10., 2.11., 8.11.1919; Wbl 25.10., 28.10., 4.11.1919.

Mannerheim's appeal, however, came too late to have any effect in involving Finland in the projected overthrow of Bolshevik power, as the Yudenich-led White Russian attack against Petrograd was, by early November, already beginning to faulter badly. This failure, coupled with other developments along the front and the beginning of a major counter-attack towards the end of November by the Red Army, together with the lack of White Russian success in acquiring any promises of Western arms, seemed to point to the imminent collapse of virtually the entire White Russian effort in the North-West.[140] Within Finland, these developments contributed to an indirect strengthening of Ståhlberg's position and policies, allowing the Vennola government to refuse Yudenich's request for military cooperation which arrived at the beginning of November. The change in White Russian fortunes was followed by an increased, and in some cases explosive, wave of open criticism in the moderate and socialist press on the subject of Mannerheim's earlier public appeal for Finnish involvement in the White Russian effort.[141]

Events appeared to be turning against Mannerheim and he left Paris for Warsaw, familiar to him from his years of service in the Imperial Army, to be in a better position to follow developments in Eastern Europe. Any hopes Mannerheim might have had of persuading the Poles to take part in intervention in cooperation with Finland and the forces under Yudenich, however, were dashed by General Pilsudsky's antipathy towards Russia, White or Red, and commitment to annexing Byelorussia and the Ukraine to Poland.[142] Developments continued to be unfavourable to the White Russian cause and interventionist plans throughout the remainder of the year, and Mannerheim soon found himself very much out in the political cold. His return to Finland at the beginning of 1920 was a modest affair. Although he and his

140. Polvinen II 1971, pp. 286, 293—304.
141. HS 6.11.. 9.11.1919; *Karjalan Aamulehti* 13.11.1919; Mylly 1978, pp. 100; SS 3.11.1919.
142. For Mannerheim's ideas, see Ingman: Politica 23.12.1919. See also the report of the Finnish chargé d'affaires in Warsaw, Boris Gyllenbögel, to the Foreign Ministry in Helsinki dated 15.12.1919 (UM 5 C 13), and the communication dated 13.12.1919 of the French military delegation in Helsinki to the War Ministry in Paris (SHAF 6 N 144).

supporters retained some say in Finnish politics, the general trend was increasingly towards moderate republican opinion. 1919 came to be something of a watershed in the debate surrounding Finnish foreign policy. Subsequent developments saw a sharp decline in the strength of aggressive anti-Bolshevik opinion committed to intervention and expansion in the East. Despite its very visible political profile, it had ultimately always been restricted to a minority of political opinion.

9. A complete about-turn in foreign trade

The end of the First World War in victory for the Western Allies presented Finnish trade and industry with a major problem of readjustment, similar to that faced only a little earlier when Germany had assumed dominance of the Finnish foreign trade market. The British blockade of Germany, which was extended to the Baltic in November 1918, served to sever Finland's by this stage extensive trading links with Germany and the territories under German and Austro-Hungarian control, and left large paper and pulp shipments already contracted for trapped on the dockside in Finnish harbours.[143]

Commercial isolation was overshadowed by the political uncertainty surrounding the country's future prospects. That trade links with the West would soon be reopened was nevertheless widely assumed at the beginning of 1919. Hopes were also focused on a reopening of the Russian market, although these were largely predicated on a belief in the eventual fall of the Bolsheviks from power. Until the Whites managed to secure a victory, it was clear that those areas of Russia under the control of the Soviet authorities, including Petrograd, would remain closed to Western exporters following the Western decision taken in November 1918 to declare them enemy territory and place them under blockade.

The reopening of export markets was expected to provide Finnish industry with the chance of clearing the large stockpiles of sawn timber, paper and pulp, which had been built up during the

143. Rautkallio 1977, pp. 369—70; O. Hovi 1980, pp. 100—1; Berättelse över Finska Cellulosaföreningens verksamhet 1918, p. 22.

war years, on what was likely to be a boom reconstruction-fired market hungry for Finland's traditional exports. Finnish industry was nevertheless aware of the problems which could be faced as a result of the need to direct a significantly greater share of the country's export effort to Western buyers than prior to the war. The greatest degree of readjustment would be required in the paper industry, as the bulk of pre-war paper exports had gone to the Russian market. In the case of non-paper timber exports, the change was not so dramatic and amounted mainly only to re-establishing existing links. Sweden, Norway and Canada, all of which had long experience of Western markets, were identified by Finnish managers as the country's major likely competitors.[144]

Finland did, however, have claim to one potentially useful advantage over her competitors in that she already possessed centralised sales organisations to handle timber and paper-related exports, originally set up to coordinate trade with Germany. This centralised type of arrangement offered some important benefits to a small country operating in a large international market, by virtue of its integration of the export resources and established links built up by all the various companies operating in the same sector of the economy, and its potential to reduce costs and spread risks. The industry set up a joint central federation in December 1918 to act as an all-embracing organisation to oversee the industry's overall export-related interests, its links with government, and to coordinate marketing and information-gathering.[145]

Pressure on the government from both consumers and the business community to remove import restrictions and thereby increase the availability of many basic commodities and allow an up-swing in industrial and commercial activity was strong in the immediate post-war period. There was some opposition to this, however, from both within industry itself and government. Industry, in particular, feared that a wave of foreign products flood-ing the market could hinder the restarting of domestic production, while the government was concerned that foreign currency reserves would be inadequate to allow any significant relaxation of import controls until exports got under way. As a

144. T. v. Wright 1928, p. 22; HS 1.2.1919; *Kauppalehti* 5.1., 20.6.1919.
145. Paasivirta 1968, pp. 205—6; Berättelse över Finska Träförädlingsindustriernas Centralförbunds verksamhet under år 1919 (SMKL archive).

stopgap measure, it was decided to give the go-ahead for imports of foodstuffs and raw materials for industry to forestall any major difficulties in the economy.[146]

The reopening of trade with the West was initially hindered, as it was in the case of a number of other countries including the neutral states, by the multiplicity of restrictive quotas which had been introduced by the Allies as a result of hostilities from 1914 onwards and which took some time to dismantle. As part of an effort to reduce the problems this created for Finland, the Western governments set up a representative body in Helsinki, the Inter-Allied Trade Commission, in January 1919, staffed by specially-posted Western consular officials. Currency restrictions were still widely in force in many Western European countries. A further problem was caused by the British order declaring Finland an enemy of the West because of her pro-German sympathies, which had been issued on 21 May 1918 and which remained in force. This had resulted in the freezing of Finnish credits and deposits at British banks and with British companies. Import licenses were also required in both Britain and France on all imported goods, and there were further restrictions on paper products in Britain and prohibitive tariffs in France.[147]

The opening-up of Finnish trade with the West was also held up by another, more general political factor relating to Finland's international position, which continued to be viewed with uncertainty in some foreign quarters. Foreign doubts focused primarily on what was seen as the questionable stability of Finland's internal affairs following the Civil War of the spring of 1918. This conflict had seriously undermined foreign attitudes towards Finland's status as a reliable trading partner, especially in those countries furthest from Finland. There was some suspicion within Finland that this was partly the result of disinformation about conditions in Finland spread by the country's Scandinavian export competitors.[148]

With the country's international trading position showing little

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146. *Kauppalehti* 4.1., 14.1., 19.1., 29.1.1919.
147. Haataja (ed.) 1978, p. 13; *Suomen Paperi- ja Puutavaralehti* 31.7., 15.8.1919; HS 4.3.1919.
148. *Kauppalehti* 25.4.1919; *Suomen Paperi- ja Puutavaralehti* 15.4.1919; *Times Trade Supplement* 26.4., 29.4.1919.

sign of immediate improvement, the Finnish government, together with leading Finnish exporters, decided in January 1919 to send a special trade delegation, including Jacob von Julin and Gösta Serlachius, two of the country's leading timber and paper industrialists, and a number of other representatives of major exporting companies, to Britain, France and the United States. In addition to being entrusted with the task of negotiating the general removal of obstacles to freer international trade, the delegation was also intended to survey the potential of Western markets for Finnish industry and promote the development of Finnish exports abroad through the setting-up of trading agencies, and negotiate whatever direct sales proved possible.[149]

There was some considerable success during the spring, in fact, in getting many of the restrictions on Finnish exports to Western Europe removed, but progress in speeding up actual export shipments proved much slower. Some companies succeeded in shipping timber to Britain as early as April, while a trial pulp shipment was dispatched to the United States in May, but it was not until July that timber and paper exports really got under way. The signing of the Treaty of Versailles at the end of June and the ending of the Allied blockade against Germany also signalled the way for the start of Finnish exports, again mainly paper and pulp, to Germany. These soon swelled to a sizeable quantity. Overall exports to Western Europe as a whole increased rapidly during the autumn, helped somewhat by the continuing fall in the value of the Finnish mark on foreign exchanges.[150]

Agricultural exports to the West also began again during the course of 1919, albeit in much reduced volume compared to pre-war figures and restricted largely to sales of butter to Germany. Demand at home, which had grown as a result of wartime shortages, also acted to limit export potential in this sector. Following the wartime problems associated with grain shortfalls which had seen Finland first dependent on imports from Russia and later the United States, the government decided on a policy of encouraging Finnish agriculture to become self-sufficient in grain,

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149. See Gösta Serlachius' memorandum from Paris dated 11.3.1919 (SMKL archive).
150. H. Hornborg 1943, p. 40; Lundell 1930, pp. 16—17; Hbl 20.7.1919; *Kauppalehti* 15.8.1919; HS 10.8.1919.

and introduced tariffs on imported cereals in a bid to increase domestic production.[151]

Despite the gradual upswing in trade with the West, Finnish industry remained faced with the problem of the continued impasse affecting trade with Russia, a market which had for long been important to Finnish exporters. This was the cause of particular concern to the country's heavy industry, which had considerably expanded its production capacity over the war years to satisfy Russian demand, and to a lesser extent to the textile industry and others. Unless these industries were able to find new markets for their products and new export opportunities, they seemed faced with little option but to content themselves with the small domestic Finnish market. Commercial circles traditionally associated with trade with Russia tried to keep themselves as well-informed on developments in the East as possible, including the possibility of Western and Finnish intervention and the various plans for the capture of Petrograd which circulated during the summer of 1919. The prospect of Petrograd falling to the White Russians prompted some preliminary preparations for the beginning of Finnish shipments to Russia, should they prove feasible. Finland's geographical proximity to the Russian market and experience of trading with Russia would, it was hoped, give Finland a head-start on other European countries.[152]

August saw the value of the mark rise somewhat on foreign markets for the first time since the end of the war, matched by a parallel increase in share prices and market confidence. The effect was short-lived, however, and soon put pay to the optimism it had inspired. The country's high level of imports served to keep the long-term balance of trade in deficit and contributed to the continuing decline in the international value of the mark, which was to continue for the next two years. Finland's high level of imports distorted the country's balance of trade particularly severely in the first half of 1919, with imports totalling some 900 million marks against export earnings of only around 100 million marks. In an effort to gain extra revenue, the government introduced a special export deposit scheme on 26 March

151. Jutila 1936, pp. 84—91; Halme 1955, p. 153; Haataja (ed.) p. 19.
152. H. Hornborg 1943, p. 42; Keskuskauppakamarin vuosikertomus II 1919, pp. 10, 28; *Kauppalehti* 23.7.1919.

applicable to all exporting companies, which caused further dissatisfaction within industry. Little improvement was forthcoming in the second half of the year, with the balance of trade continuing in the red. Export earnings rose to 880 million, but this was offset by a tripling of imports to some 2,510 million marks.[153] The continuing fall in the value of the mark also became the subject of sharp political disagreement when it was seized upon by the Right as one of the main reasons behind Mannerheim's poor showing in the presidential election and as contributing to foreign uncertainty about Finland's future. This was dismissed by the government, which identified the country's growing trade deficit as the major factor in the continuing fall of the currency.[154]

A particularly prominent feature of the changes which took place in the balance of Finland's trading relations with the rest of Europe in 1919 compared to the pre-war situation was the emergence of Britain as a major, if not dominant export market. From taking 26.8% of Finland's total exports in 1913, Britain accounted for 48.8% by 1919, a development which had been paralleled by the disappearance, to all intents and purposes, of Russia as an export market. Germany's share of Finland's exports fell from 12.8% to 9.3% over the same period, although the latter figure still represented a major advance in Finnish-German trade following its virtual cessation immediately after the end of the war. Exports to Sweden grew only marginally, from 4.1% to 8%.

The new concentration of Finnish exports on Western markets which emerged from 1919 onwards was most evident in the timber and paper industries, with the latter rapidly gaining ground alongside the more established sawn goods trade. Food exports, as a proportion of Finland's total export effort, fell to half of pre-war figures, from 17% to 8.1%.[155] The exceptional concentration of exports on timber and paper products, however, brought with it a heavy dependence on the fluctuations of the overall Western market, and the British market and the City of London in particular. The relatively high level of competition on Western

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153. Lundell 1930, pp. 11, 20—1.
154. Hbl 31.7., 2.9., 10.10.1919; US 22.11.1919; HS 12.10., 6.12.1919; *Kauppalehti* 1.8.1919.
155. Halme 1955, p. 153.

markets also posed a continuing challenge to the technical and marketing capabilities of Finland's exporting industries, which had previously operated under significantly less demanding market conditions.

Unlike the timber and paper industries with their efficient centralised export sales organisations, the remainder of Finnish industry, commerce and banking lacked any coordinating joint organisations. Finland's main Scandinavian competitor, Sweden, also lacked any comparable centralised sales organisations to those set up Finland, with individual companies completely responsible for their own marketing abroad. The need was recognised, all the same, for some form of organisation to support Finland's non timber-related and non-agricultural exports and to encourage their development to counterbalance the dominance of the traditional exporting industries. Plans were put in hand to transform the information office of the Central Chamber of Commerce, which had been set up in 1917, into a centre for coordinating information and advice on the wider aspects of export issues. Plans were also discussed for the Central Chamber of Commerce itself to act as an advisory body to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the appointment of diplomatic representatives or economic advisers to represent Finnish interests abroad.[156] The founding of the Finnish Export Association in 1919 also reflected the general desire to widen the range of Finnish exports.

10. International attitudes towards newly-independent Finland

Finland was undeniably fortunate in gaining the limited degree of international recognition she did for her declaration of independence at a time when hostilities in Europe were still raging and when events of much wider significance, such as the Brest-Litovsk talks and the renewed German offensive in the East which followed their breakdown, dominated international interest.

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156. *Kauppalehti* 24.8., 28.9.1919; *Suomen Paperi- ja Puutavaralehti* 15.9.1919; *Mercator* 24.10.1919; Keskuskauppakamarin vuosikertomus II 1919, pp. 22—4.

Above and beyond this, however, Finland did not otherwise attract much foreign attention during early 1918, except in Sweden. The reactivation of activity along the Western Front in the spring only further served to divert attention away from Finnish affairs. As a newly-independent state occupying a sensitive location on Russia's north-west border, Finland was all the same the subject of some interest abroad, both on a governmental level and within the international press.

The outbreak of civil war in Finland provoked an unusually extensive and passionate debate in Sweden. Argument focused mainly on the conflict's implications for Swedish policy towards Finland. The Swedish Right argued strongly for giving assistance to White Finland, initially calling for direct intervention, although this later gave way to more modest demands for military aid to be sent to the Whites. The rural conservative press, together with right-wing pressure groups, were the most prominent in these calls, collecting a number of mass petitions calling for Sweden to help the White Finnish cause. The demands put forward by the Right during parliamentary discussions on the issue from February onwards were somewhat more temperate. Arvid Lindman and Ernst Trygger, two leading politicians on the Right, limited their arguments to putting the case for the right of the White authorities in Finland to purchase arms in Sweden and to be allowed transit rights across Swedish territory. It was nevertheless emphasised that the struggle in Finland was one not only in defence of legitimacy and the supremacy of the rule of law against the forces of revolution but also one which would decide whether the Finland of the future was to be a part of Scandinavia or a country firmly within the Russian sphere of influence.[157]

The Right's desire to assist White Finnish forces was also linked to wider political considerations. By taking some form of initiative in Finnish affairs at a time of obvious Russian weakness, it was assumed that Sweden's overall international position in the northern Baltic would be strengthened, possibly to such an extent as to allow Sweden to regain something of the power and influence which she had enjoyed in previous centuries in the area. Hopes

157. StD 3.2., 8.2., 21.2., 13.3.1918; SvD 3.2., 4.2.1918. See also Arvid Lindman's speech on 20.2.1918 and E. Trygger's on 27.2.1918 in the Swedish Parliament (RDPr 1918 AK I, n. 16, pp. 27—36; RDPr 1918 FK I, n. 12, pp. 3—9).

were also high that if Sweden was to help the Whites in their hour of need there was a good chance of the latter being willing to cede the Åland Islands to Sweden as recompense at the end of the conflict.[158]

Edén's government, backed by the Liberals and Social Democrats, however, remained firm in its opposition to any Swedish involvement in the Finnish struggle, fearing that too close an association with developments in Finland would inevitably result in a weakening of Sweden's traditional policy of neutrality. Pressure from the Social Democrats in particular served to keep the government committed to this established policy of non-involvement, despite the willingness of Hellner, the Foreign Minister, to allow arms shipments to the Whites. Permission was granted in February, however, by the Swedish Maritime Ministry to the Finnish volunteer battalion, en route from Germany to Vaasa, to pass through Swedish territorial waters, thus giving it protection from possible Russian attack.

No support was forthcoming from the Branting-led Social Democrats for the Finnish labour movement's decision to embark on a policy of violent social revolution. In a statement issued in mid-February, the Swedish party described the move as an unwarranted armed uprising against a democratically-elected parliament and an attack on the very basis of democracy in Finland. The Swedish party's fears about the possible future consequences of events in Finland prompted a visit by the party secretary, Gustav Möller, to Helsinki at the end of February to meet a number of the leaders of the Red authorities, as part of an attempt to sound out the possibilities for Swedish mediation between the two sides to bring the Civil War to an end.[159]

In contrast to this critical attitude adopted by the official Social Democratic party, Sweden's left-wing socialists, Carl Lindhagen and Zeth Höglund among the most vocal of them, who since 1917

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158. StD 7.2.1918; Abl 17.3.1918; K. G. Westman 1918, p. 23; *Svensk Lösen* 15.2., 31.3.1918.

159. See Edén's speeches in the Swedish Parliament on 20.2. and 27.2.1918 (RDPr 1918 AK n. 16, pp. 5—10, RDPr 1918 FK n. 12, pp. 2—9); Hamilton 1956, pp. 208—9; DN 3.2., 6.2., 7.2., 12.2.1919; Soc-Dem 31.1., 2.2., 4.2., 5.2., 6.2., 9.2., 12.2.1918; StT 14.2.1918; Palmstierna II 1953, p. 131; J. Lindgren I 1950, pp. 362—8.

had formed their own parliamentary group, came out in support of the struggle being waged by the Finnish Left. The events in Finland were described by *Folkets Dagblad-Politiken*, a paper close to the group, as a class struggle presaging the much wider European class conflict to come. It was also hoped that the Finnish situation would act to rekindle discussion within the Swedish labour movement about future policies and undermine Branting's position within the Social Democrats.[160]

The Åland Islands attracted much Swedish attention from the very beginning of the conflict in Finland, particularly as a result of the continued presence of Russian troops on the Islands. After some discussion, the Swedish government decided on 13 February to intervene in the area, in what was described as a 'purely humanitarian capacity', by sending a Swedish detachment to the Islands, accompanied by a warship escort. Its arrival coincided with that of a White Civil Guard unit from the Finnish mainland, and was soon followed by that of a group of Red militia from Turku. Negotiations were set in hand by the Swedes between the groups to defuse the tense situation which developed, leading to an agreement at the end of February providing for the departure of Red and White forces, stripped of their arms, to Turku and Ostrobothnia respectively, and of the Russian troops stationed on the Islands.

The Åland Islands question quickly developed into a major issue of political contention in Sweden during the spring. In his defence of the government's decision to send Swedish forces to the Islands in Parliament on 20 February, Edén stressed that the detachment's aims were strictly limited and restricted to preventing bloodshed in the area and protecting local life and property, and that the move did not represent any attempt to prejudge the solution of the region's future political status.[161] In sharp contrast to this interpretation of Swedish aims, the right-wing leader Ernst Trygger had suggested only a month before on 23 January that nothing less than complete Swedish sovereignty over the Islands could provide Sweden with the security she needed. This call gained added momentum during February with the news that a popular

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160. *Folkets Dagblad Politiken* 5.2., 6.2., 13.2.1918.
161. Gihl 1951, pp. 366—9; StD 24.1.1918; DN 24.1., 3.2.1918.

referendum had been held on the Islands at the end of 1917. In this, a large majority had voted for annexation to Sweden, a petition to which effect was presented to the Swedish King, Gustav V, at the beginning of February by a special delegation of islanders.[162] Although aware of these local views, Edén remained committed to the importance of maintaining friendly relations with Finland, arguing that any decision on the future status of the area would have to be arrived at through joint negotiations with the Finnish government and not through unilateral action on Sweden's part.[163]

The details of the content of the agreements signed by the White Finnish authorities with Germany on 7 March came as an unexpected shock to all sections of political opinion when they became known in Sweden. A steady expansion of German influence in the Baltic, as a result of Finland's decision to seek security through an alliance with Germany, was widely predicted likely to result. This prospect was especially unwelcome to those groups which had previously called for a reassessment of Swedish aims and the adoption of a more active foreign policy. The arrival of a German naval squadron in the Åland Islands at the beginning of March put a further brake on Swedish hopes regarding a possible transfer of the area's sovereignty.

The general tone of Swedish comment on Finnish affairs became, in consequence, significantly more critical of the White Finnish authorities. Finland's motives in deciding to establish closer ties with Germany, in particular, came to assume a central position in the debate. *Dagens Nyheter,* in typical liberal fashion, argued that the Finnish decision meant that the country had become little more than a German vassal state, and that what had traditionally been interpreted in Sweden as the Russian threat was now developing into a joint German-Finnish threat, and as such undermined Sweden's established policy of neutrality.[164] This unsympathetic view of Finland, together with comment on the likely destabilising repercussions of the Finnish decision on

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162. See Trygger's speech made on 23.1.1919 in the Swedish Parliament (RDPr 1918 FK, n. 4, pp. 7—8).
163. See Edén's speech made on 23.1.1919 in the Swedish Parliament (RDPr 1918 FK n. 4, pp. 29—30); DN 15.1., 24.1.1918.
164. DN 8.3., 9.3., 12.3.1918; StT 9.3.1918.

Sweden's international position, was echoed in the pages of *Social-Demokraten*, which described Sweden's best option in the changed circumstances as lying in developing closer links with the other Scandinavian countries, in a bid to create a unified Nordic neutral region. The value of Sweden's new trade agreement with Britain signed in March as a counterbalance to the developments set in train by the Finnish decision was stressed by Branting.[165] The latter agreement also underlined the determination of the Edén government to underpin the country's neutrality through links with the West.

The increasing closeness of relations between Finland and Germany was seen as particularly disadvantageous to Sweden on the Swedish Right, primarily because of the restrictions it imposed on closer links between Finland and Sweden, and between Sweden and the Åland Islands. Finland was described as being finally lost to Sweden by the activist magazine *Svensk Lösen*. Any hopes of a change in Swedish foreign policy had also been dealt a severe blow, it was lamented. The blame for all of this was laid fairly and squarely at the door of the Edén government and its reluctance to provide the Whites with aid.[166]

A decidedly cooler attitude towards Finland was evident in Sweden across the whole political spectrum following the end of the Civil War. The various splits which had developed within the Swedish labour movement over attitudes towards the Civil War dissolved in its aftermath in the criticism uniting the movement over the White Finnish authorities' treatment of Red prisoners. A strongly-worded protest note was delivered to the Finnish Legation in Stockholm at the end of April by Per Albin Hansson, Gustav Möller and Carl Lindhagen, condemning what was described as the unchecked 'White terror' then raging in Finland. Lindhagen also presented a similarly-worded note on the situation in Finland to the German Legation.[167] The question of the fate of the Red prisoners in Finland became a focal issue in certain sections of the Swedish press during the summer of 1918. The publication of a highly critical report by Professor Robert

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165. Soc-Dem 9.3., 18.3.1918.
166. StD 9.3., 10.3.1918; SvD 4.3., 6.3., 10.3., 20.3.1918; *Det Nya Sverige* 20.3.1918; *Svensk Tidskrift* 1918, pp. 86—8; DN 26.4., 22.5.1918; StT 12.3.1918.
167. *Folkets Dagblad Politiken* 20.4.1918; Soc-Dem 29.4.1918.

Tigerstedt on health conditions in the prison camps, and an interview with Väinö Tanner on the treatment of the prisoners, which appeared in both *Social-Demokraten* and *Dagens Nyheter* in August, attracted the most attention.[168]

Increased criticism of the Finnish authorities also emerged in the major non-socialist papers in Sweden when it became clear that the Finnish monarchists were planning to choose a German prince as the country's future king. While aware of the pressures the government in Finland was under in the aftermath of the Civil War, *Dagens Nyheter* was nevertheless unable to hide its surprise and disappointment that no sufficiently authoritative figure capable of guaranteeing future internal domestic stability could apparently be found within Finland, and that the Finns had finally had to look to Germany for assistance. The rise in the influence and power of radical nationalist opinion in Finland also caused unease in Stockholm, and increased fears about the future security of the country's Swedish-speaking minority. This development was also seen as serving to further weaken Finland's relations with the rest of Scandinavia.[169]

Swedish commentators similarly proved critical of Finnish aims in East Karelia. The future of the region was seen as uncertain at best, while any changes in the border in Finland's favour which took place with German assistance would, it was thought, inevitably increase Finland's long-term dependence on Germany.[170] All in all, relations between Finland and Sweden had reached an unusually low ebb by the latter half of 1918, with both countries' foreign policies structured on diametrically opposed assumptions about the final outcome of the war.

German military interest in Finland began to show signs of revitalisation from mid-February 1918 onwards, following the failure of the Brest-Litovsk peace negotiations to progress in

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168. Soc-Dem 13.7., 27.8., 28.8.1918. A special 'Finnish committee' (Finlandskommitté), organised by the labour movement, assisting Finnish Reds fleeing Finland and organising demonstrations against the White government, was active in Stockholm during the summer of 1918. (see Finlandskommitté archive/AA).
169. DN 28.6., 8.7., 7.8., 9.8.1918; StD 1.7., 10.7., 6.8., 11.8.1918; NDA 14.8.1918.
170. Abl 9.5.1918.

accordance with German hopes. The beginning of the major German offensive along the Eastern Front that followed only reinforced this German interest, while the Finnish Civil War, instead of alleviating German pressure, in fact offered Germany a convenient basis for intervention. The German decision to dispatch an expeditionary force to Finland was aimed at protecting German interests in the area by developing a bridgehead to repulse Western attempts to open up a new front in the Murmansk area. The German foothold in Finland also provided the government and military leadership in Berlin with a good vantage point from which to keep abreast of developments in Petrograd, and a convenient base for exerting military pressure on the shaky Soviet authorities.

Germany's increased military activity in the East did not go uncriticised by certain sections of German political opinion. The Social Democrats and the centre parties were committed to a policy of achieving a negotiated peace and had naturally hoped that the talks at Brest-Litovsk would lead to peace in the East. These hopes had been particularly prominent in the pages of the newspapers most closely associated with these groups, *Vorwärts* and *Frankfurter Zeitung*. The victory achieved by the military in the decision of the German Imperial Council on 13 February to approve an extensive programme of territorial expansion in the East, however, meant a weakening in the positions of both the government and the Foreign Ministry, both of which had supported a less ambitious policy.[171]

The actual departure of German troops to Finland following the signing of the Brest-Litovsk treaty with Russia was delayed by Soviet opposition to the operation and the Bolshevik government's call for joint non-intervention in Finnish affairs, and by the criticism which had emerged to the plan from the opposition within the German National Assembly. The Social Democrats argued that those in favour of intervention in Finland were guilty of misrepresenting the situation when they described the Russians as the main opponents of the White Finns, and of ignoring the real class nature of the conflict. Instead of military involvement, *Vorwärts* argued, Germany should direct her efforts to providing

171. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 156—7; Rautkallio 1977, pp. 55—7.

mediation between the two sides. This was echoed by the liberal *Frankfurter Zeitung,* which described the German leadership's agreement with the Vaasa government as an attempt to reduce Finland to the status of a dependent territory.[172] Both papers doubted whether the government's policy would lead to good relations in the future between the two countries.

During the interim that ensued following the German High Command's decision to postpone the departure of the expeditionary force until after the Brest-Litovsk agreement had been ratified by the German and Soviet governments, the German Foreign Ministry established contact with the Red government in Helsinki, without the knowledge of the Vaasa authorities, to sound out the possibilities of mediation between the two sides, but with no success. The German Left, in the shape of figures like Philip Scheidemann, remained consistently opposed to any expansion of German aims in the East. A majority of Social Democrats abstained and the independent socialists voted against the agreements signed between Germany and White Finland when they came before Parliament for discussion in March, but to no avail.[173]

Military intervention in Finland, in the shape of the dispatch of an expeditionary force under General von der Goltz to southern Finland in support of the White authorities, was defended by the government and influential conservative opinion in Germany as justified assistance to a country struggling against the encroachment of Bolshevism. Germany and Finland were described as sharing similar aims in wanting to prevent the expansion of both Russian and Western influence into the Finnish area. In response to questions on the Finnish debate surrounding the issue of the country's future constitution, it was suggested that a republican Finland would be incapable of effectively resisting either Russian or British pressure.

The success of the White forces and their ultimate victory over their Red opponents in the Civil War led to the spread of a general belief in Germany that Goltz's troops had been a decisive factor in

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172. Paasivirta 1957, p. 159; *Vorwärts* 8.3., 10.3.1918; *Frankfurter Zeitung* 8.3., 12.3.1918.

173. *Frankfurter Zeitung* 23.3.1918. Also see Scheidemann's and Haase's speeches on 22.3.1918 in the German National Assembly (Deutscher Reichstag 1918, Band 311 pp. 4536, 4544).

the struggle. With little knowledge of the political and social situation in Finland, it was easy for German commentators to assume a close link between the consolidation of Finnish independence and the role of the German expeditionary force, and thereby create a narrow, stereotyped image of Finnish politics. The obvious gratitude towards the Germans felt amongst White opinion in Finland was paralleled in the exaggeratedly heroic tone in which the White struggle during the spring began to be described in Germany, and in the multitude of references to the White Finnish troops as having distinguished themselves as loyal comrades-in-arms.[174]

German policy towards Finland in the post-Civil War period was shaped, as it had been previously, by Finland's position in Germany's overall policy strategy towards Eastern Europe and Russia. Finnish efforts towards establishing a monarchy with a German prince as the country's first king were regarded favourably, as such a move was only likely to strengthen future German influence on the course of Finnish politics. The German government refused, however, to contemplate allowing a member of the German Royal Family ascend the Finnish throne, as it was feared that this would unnecessarily tie Germany's hand in her future dealings with Finland.

Following the shift in the focus of the German military effort during the spring to the Western Front, the maintenance of stable relations with the Soviet government on the basis of the Brest-Litovsk agreement, combined with a desire to check the southward advance of British forces from Murmansk, became particularly important for the German authorities. This was reflected during the summer of 1918 in the unwillingness of the Germans to support Finnish territorial expansion in East Karelia and their attempts to persuade the Finns to participate in joint action against the British.

Hopes were high in Helsinki at the beginning of the peace negotiations between Finland and Russia, which took place in August in Berlin with German cooperation, of the Finnish side's

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174. See for ex. Ullrich Schoultz: Aus Finnlands Freiheitskampf. Greifswald 1921; Ernst v. Hülsen: Rückblick auf die Vorgeschichte des deutschen Finnland-Feldzuges 1918; Deutsche-finnische Brücke 1928; C. Henke, G. Liesner: Um Finnlands Freiheit. Berlin 1932.

potential to push through border changes in East Karelia. These attempts, however, were consistently refused by the Russians, tacitly supported by the Germans who made no effort to support the Finnish plans, who instead proposed moving the border on the Karelian Isthmus further northwards, towards Viipuri and away from Petrograd.[175] While refusing to encourage Finnish expansion, the Germans were keen nevertheless for the Finns to take an active part in halting the British advance from Murmansk, in line with the agreement appended to the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty at the end of August which provided for cooperation between Germany and Soviet Russia in operations against the British expeditionary force. As part of this understanding, the German government had promised the Soviet authorities that its forces would ensure the withdrawal of any Finnish units taking part in joint action with German troops in the area north of Lake Ladoga back across the border at the end of operations, thereby guaranteeing in advance that East Karelia would remain part of Russia. The subsequent weakening of the German position on the Western Front which grew from August onwards, however, saw the halting of preparations for joint operations in the region.[176]

The decision taken by a number of states at the beginning of 1918 to recognise Finland's declaration of independence caused little comment in the British or French press. The Finnish question tended to be overshadowed by other more far-reaching developments taking place at the same time elsewhere in Eastern Europe and above all by the Russian question. Even the outbreak of civil war in Finland caused only the minorist of ripples in the London and Paris papers. British and French attitudes, particularly at the governmental level, towards events in Finland, despite the small scale of the coverage afforded the country, did show some differences of interpretation, however.

The steady expansion of German influence in Eastern Europe formed the main focus of concern of the French authorities in their analysis of developments in the region, despite France's minimal potential to support anti-German opinion in the area. This was also apparent in the style of comment on the Finnish question

175. Paasivirta 1957, p. 341.
176. Ibid., p. 348; Polvinen II 1971, pp. 49—51.

which appeared in the major French papers and in the reports sent back to Paris by French diplomats stationed in Helsinki and Stockholm following the outbreak of the Civil War. French attention was ultimately drawn much less to the details and implications of the conflict for Finland than to the differing attitudes of the two sides to Germany and German influence. Given French support for fostering anti-German opinion and the motives behind the French recognition of Finnish independence given on 4 January, it was thus not perhaps entirely surprising that the French consul in Helsinki adopted what in practice amounted to semi-recognition of the Red authorities in the Finnish capital.[177]

Some attention had been drawn in the French press to the problem of Finland's future foreign policy in the light of her new status as an independent state even prior to the beginning of the Civil War. It was hoped that Finland would develop close ties with the Scandinavian countries, in preference to concluding any alliance with either Russia or Germany. As the Civil War progressed, the French press was quick to seize on anything, such as the news that the Finnish volunteer battalion was to be moved from Germany to Finland and that Germany had agreed to send arms shipments to the Vaasa government, which seemed to point to White Finland's moving closer to Germany. Coverage was also given in *Journal des Débats* and *Le Temps* to the increasingly open pro-German public statements of Svinhufvud and Sario.[178] Deepening French fears that the White authorities were in fact committed to a definite policy of closer links with Germany were confirmed in early March, when the news reached Paris of the package of agreements signed between the Vaasa government and the Germans. News items about Finland, describing the country's steady slide into the German sphere of influence and her gradual adoption of the role of a German satellite, began to be increasingly featured in the French papers. Attention was also drawn to the increasing strain put on Sweden's neutrality by the developments in Finland.[179] Dominated as it was by a concern with the wider international implications of the conflict within Finland, the

177. K. Hovi 1975, pp. 98—9.
178. *Journal des Débats* 28.1., 11.2., 18.2., 1.3.1918; *Le Temps* 23.2., 24.2.1918.
179. *Journal des Débats* 15.3., 16.3.1918; *Le Temps* 9.3., 23.4.1918.

French press devoted little or no space to any news about the actual events of the Civil War itself.

Britain's refusal to recognise Finnish independence in January 1918 had been linked to a decision to wait for the reaction of the Russian National Constituent Assembly on the issue. Despite the dissolution of the Assembly then meeting in Petrograd by the Bolshevik authorities shortly prior to the outbreak of civil war in Finland, no moves were made by the British government to change its stance on the Finnish question, given the uncertain position of the Bolshevik government. The landing of British military units in Murmansk in November 1917 and the subsequent growth of the British military presence in the area, directed towards opening up a new Eastern Front, indicated the British commitment to a long-term Russian policy and one which was not to be easily diverted by concessions to peripheral Finnish interests.

Britain's intransigence gave her a significant advantage over France during the spring, in that by not recognising Finnish independence she was able to continue to use the question of recognition as a diplomatic and political lever to influence the course of Finnish politics. The Foreign Office kept itself closely informed of the changes and developments in White Finnish attitudes on foreign policy issues. The terms placed on the possible shipments of Western food aid to Finland and the Vaasa government's reactions to them in February 1918 were clearly seen in London as a measure of the overall position and allegiances of the White authorities. As the major country behind the Western blockade of Germany, Britain was also keen to extend restrictions to include trade relations between Germany and Finland, but the Vaasa government proved unwilling to accept the British proposals.[180]

News of the agreements concluded between the White authorities and Germany at the beginning of March forced the Foreign Office to conclude that its attempts to influence Finland to adopt a more pro-Western stance had failed. *The Times,* reflecting on the development, described the Baltic as having entered on a new period of 'Germanification'.[181] British commentators also

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180. Paasivirta 1961, pp. 85—6.
181. *The Times* 9.3., 9.4.1918; *Daily Chronicle* 20.3.1918.

increasingly began to note the prominence of White interest in Finland towards territorial expansion in East Karelia, a sensitive issue for Britain as, despite the changed international situation, there were still compelling reasons for ensuring that links in the area between the Western powers and Russia were not disrupted. Concern over Allied communications led both the British and French authorities to warn the Svinhufvud government at the end of April over involvement in East Karelia. Overall developments in the Arctic Ocean area during the summer of 1918 were the source of some anxiety to the British, with the penetration of German reconnaissance units as far north as Rovaniemi and Kemijärvi. A Finnish request at the end of June for the withdrawal of British forces from the Petsamo area was refused, and their advance southwards further east continued, resulting in the occupation of Archangel on the White Sea soon after.

With the domination of the British and French press by news and comment on the major battles along the Western Front during the summer, little space remained for reports from Finland, although some issues, such as the plans for electing a German prince to the Finnish throne, did make an appearance. Finland was by now almost universally described as a close ally of Germany.[182] The Finnish vote on the choice of a German King on 9 October, coming at a time when the war in Europe was entering its final and decisive stage, however, provoked a strong French reaction, in the shape of an announcement on 15 October withdrawing French recognition of Finnish independence. This move, clearly designed to put pressure on the Finnish authorities to change their minds, could have left Helsinki in no doubt about the West's opposition to the Finnish decision and determination to see a modification of Finnish foreign policy towards one more favourably disposed towards the West.

Following the end of the war, the basis of Finland's independent existence, however, was never seriously questioned by the British and French governments, although some differences of opinion between the two powers on the question of how to treat Finland

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182. For French comment, see *Le Temps* 26.5., 30.5., 7.8., 23.9.1918; *Journal des Débats* 7.7., 28.7.1918; *L'Homme Libre* 18.6.1918. For British comment, see Balfour's speech in the Commons on 8.8.1918 (PD 5h Ser., Vol. 101, p. 1628; *The Times* 2.8.1918; *Manchester Guardian* 11.10.1918.

did emerge. The Armistice brought a major change in the balance of power in the Baltic, with the withdrawal of German forces from Finland and the arrival of a Royal Navy squadron in the Baltic to complement the British land-based presence in the Murmansk area. Faced with the sudden crumbling of German support and with it the basis of the country's previous foreign policy, Finland, in need of the security offered by complete Western recognition, had little choice but to comply with Western pressure. Britain's decision to recognise Finland at the beginning of May fulfilled this Finnish requirement, while at the same time providing Britain with additional security for her interests along Russia's north-western border.

Britain's desire for stability in the Finnish area and the northern Baltic was also evident in the cautious attitude adopted over the question of Finnish intervention in Russia, one which neither directly encouraged nor pressured Finland to take part in any attack on Petrograd.[183] British opposition was also made plain on a number of occasions to Finnish territorial demands in East Karelia, an area which was considered as being of too great an importance to Russia for the latter to be willing to allow its transference to Finland. On the Åland Islands question, the British argued successfully for the issue to be left to the League of Nations rather than the Paris peace conference to settle.

French attitudes towards Finland improved after the end of the war, to such an extent that France was soon willing to renew her recognition of Finnish independence, which had been withdrawn as a consequence of the Finnish election of a German King. This change was closely linked to Western plans for intervention in Russia and a desire to register French support for Mannerheim as Regent. France's significant economic interests in Russia, and in the Ukraine in particular, underlay much of the French enthusiasm for ensuring White success against the Bolsheviks and the direct support given to the White Russian forces operating under General Denikin. The opposition of the French National Assembly and public opinion, however, meant that the

183. See for ex. General Gough's memorandum of 2.7.1919 to Mannerheim (WO 106/614) and E. H. Carr's memorandum of 10.7.1919 on the East Karelian question (FO 608/187).

government's most ambitious plans aimed at assisting the White effort, such as the dispatch of French troops to southern Russia, had to be shelved.[184]

French diplomatic support for Mannerheim, therefore, was a relatively painless way to advance the cause of intervention, without exacerbating domestic opinion. Beyond generally encouraging Finland to take part in joint operations against Petrograd, however, France proved unwilling to offer any more substantial aid than promises of very limited quantities of weapons and military equipment. Finland's relatively minor role in French interventionist thinking was reflected in the major debate on the Russian question which took place in the French Chamber of Deputies in May 1919, in which the bulk of speakers addressed their attention to the problem of the Ukraine, with only one arguing directly for Finnish participation under Mannerheim's leadership in a joint campaign.[185]

Some retrospective comment on recent events in Finland and shifts in Finnish policy appeared in the major British papers following the end of the war. Finland's role as what was often referred to as a close ally of Germany was not easily or quickly forgotten. Particular concern, both in the press and in the House of Commons, although somewhat belated in comparison with the Scandinavian countries, was focused on the question of the fate of the Red prisoners in Finland. Interest on the issue mainly originated from within the Labour and Liberal parties. The numbers of dead and executed in the specially set-up prison camps were the subject of continued comment in the Commons for a number of months after the end of the Civil War. A call was even made for the convening of a special committee to investigate the various accusations and counter-accusations concerning politically-inspired violence in Russia and Finland.[186] Critical press comment on the treatment of the Red prisoners by the Whites extended from the left of centre *Daily Herald* and *Manchester*

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184. Grouzet 1969, pp. 219—20.
185. Annales de la Chambre des Députés. Debats parlamentaires 1919 II, pp. 2314—8, 2338, 2351. The only reference to Finland is contained in the comment made by Chapelain.
186. See the comments by J. C. Wedgewood and Smith made in the House of Commons on 21.5. and 31.5.1919 (Parliamentary Debates. House of Commons 1919 Vol. 116, pp. 1504—6, 1509.

Guardian to *The Times*.[187] The relatively wide coverage given to the issue in Britain, while reflecting a measure of genuine humanitarian concern, also owed part of its origin to the general anti-German sentiment then prevalent in Britain and which inevitably rubbed off on Germany's past allies.

Finland's descent into civil war so soon after her declaration of independence had inevitably raised a number of doubts in Western Europe about Finland's overall readiness for independent statehood, although these were somewhat tempered in the light of the widespread upheavals affecting large portions of post-war Europe. There was some satisfaction in the West, especially within conservative opinion, that the Whites forces had been successful in putting down the Red insurrection, which was typically seen as having been largely a knock-on result of the October Revolution in Russia and inspired by, if not actively encouraged from Petrograd. It was against this interpretation of events in Finland that Mannerheim's name became known and respected in Britain and France.[188] The relative calm that fell over Finland following the end of the Civil War was instrumental in improving Western attitudes towards the country and convincing both Britain and France of the wisdom of finally recognising Finnish independence.

The discussion of possible intervention in Russia which flourished in the West during 1919 also had the effect of drawing further Western attention to Finland. Opinion in the leading British and French papers towards Finland and her future as a newly-independent state was divided. The conservative press made no attempt to hide its hopes that Finland would take part in joint operations against the Bolsheviks, a fact which explains Mannerheim's obvious popularity with papers like *Le Temps* and *The Times*. Both the latter continued to hint that Western recognition of Finnish independence, although by now officially given, remained somehow conditional and could be withdrawn if Finnish policies proved too out of tune with Western expectations.

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187. *The Times* 11.2.1919.
188. See Henning Söderhjelm: The red insurrection in Finland 1918. Also John Rees' comment in the Commons on 5.11.1919 (PD 1919. Vol. 120, p. 1594) and Aarno Yrjö-Koskinen's letter of 9.8.1919 to Vennola (Vennola collection 2). Paasivirta 1969, p. 19.

Possible Finnish participation in intervention would, according to *Le Temps*, serve to consolidate Western faith in Finland's commitment to Western policies and at the same time ensure White Russian 'gratitude and friendship for many generations to come'. *The Times* was somewhat milder in its reservations about the Finnish position, arguing that Finnish support for General Yudenich would be sufficient proof of the fact that Finland had, as it were, 'truly earned' her independent status.[189]

The official British and French attitudes towards intervention, however, had by this stage grown significantly more critical and less favourable to any form of involvement in Russia, Western or Finnish. The *Manchester Guardian,* reflecting this shift in opinion, wrote in approving tones of the Finnish government's refusal to assist White forces. The West would not have come to Finland's assistance in any case, the paper observed, and nor would the White Russians have agreed in the final analysis to recognising Finnish independence.[190]

The elimination of first Russian and then German influence in Finland, and the change in the overall balance of power in the Baltic as a whole, had been of positive benefit in improving the security of Sweden's international position. Finland remained a problem for Swedish foreign policy-makers, however. The uncertainty over the Helsinki government's position towards possible future concessions over the Åland Islands put a large question mark over Swedish aims of extending discussion on the Islands to include that of their future sovereignty. Finland's increasing interest in the possibility of territorial expansion in East Karelia, together with joint intervention with the Western powers against Petrograd, seemed to indicate to the Swedes that developing good relations with her western neighbour was relatively low on the Finnish order of priorities. A possible White Russian victory in the East also held out the spectre of renewed Russian interest in the Åland Islands, one certain to frustrate any possible transfer of the area's sovereignty to Sweden. Trotsky's comments on the issue, made in his capacity as Soviet Commissar for Foreign

189. *Le Temps* 25.10., 29.10.1919; *The Times* 24.10., 4.11.1919.
190. *Manchester Guardian* 8.11.1919.

Affairs at the beginning of 1918, alluding to possible Soviet demands with regard to the Islands, also remained at the back of Swedish minds.[191]

Mannerheim's visit to Stockholm in February 1919 provoked a widespread resurgence of analysis of the questions raised by the Finnish Civil War. The Left, in particular, did little to hide its continued hostility towards the White victors. Mannerheim was passionately attacked in the pages of the left-wing *Folkets Dagblad-Politiken*, which held him personally responsible for the ill-treatment of Red prisoners, to such an extent that the Swedish Attorney-General brought an indictment for libel against the paper.[192] *Social-Demokraten*, in its commentary on Mannerheim's visit, stressed the opposition of the Swedish labour movement to the Finnish government's handling of the aftermath of the Civil War. Sweden, it was argued, should have waited until after the Finnish elections and for the restoration of some form of authentic Finnish democracy before making any direct moves towards improving relations between the two countries.[193]

Sweden's major non-socialist papers proved much less critical towards Mannerheim's visit, interpreting it as an important step forward in the process of improving Swedish-Finnish relations and one possibly likely to improve the chances of a favourable solution, favourable that is to Sweden, emerging on the Åland Islands issue. The increased stability of bilateral relations was underlined in cautiously optimistic tones by *Dagens Nyheter,* one of the papers close to the government. The more right-wing *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* pointed to Mannerheim's visit, at the invitation of Edén's government, as indicating that both the centre parties and the Social Democrats now recognised, although admittedly late in the day, that the White struggle in Finland had been justified.[194]

Swedish comment was also drawn to the question of Finland's possible participation in interventionist operations against Petrograd, and the country's presidential election in the summer of 1919. While tacitly supporting a Finnish role in intervention and

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191. Gihl 1951, pp. 405—7; DN 6.5.1919; Palmstierna II 1953, p. 336.
192. *Folkets Dagblad Politiken* 11.2., 12.2., 14.2.1919.
193. Soc-Dem 4.2., 12.2., 13.2., 14.2.1919; Hamilton 1956, pp. 369—70.
194. DN 14.2., 15.2.1919; NDA 3.2.1919.

thus in the international struggle against Bolshevism, *Svenska Dagbladet* feared that a White Russian victory would result in Sweden again finding herself faced with the same security problems in the East which had existed prior to 1914. It was even possible, the paper suggested pessimistically, that the Western powers might encourage Finland to agree to an union with Russia. The tendency of British and French papers like *Le Temps* and *The Times* to describe Finnish independence as somehow conditional on Finland's good behaviour was roundly condemned by *Svenska Dagbladet*, as were Western attempts to pressure Finland into participation in intervention. The choice of Ståhlberg as Finland's first President, however, was not especially welcomed, because of doubts over whether a liberal style of politics would be determined enough to resist the threat of Bolshevism in the East. *Dagens Nyheter*, in contrast, saw Ståhlberg's strength as lying in his potential to gain a wide measure of domestic political consensus.[195] *Aftonbladet*, which had backed Swedish aid for the White forces during the Civil War, stressed the significance of the general struggle against Bolshevism and Finland's part in it for much of 1919. While supporting Mannerheim, and by extension his policy of involvement in intervention, *Aftonbladet* nevertheless warned that the latter contained a number of dangers for Finland.[196]

The Swedish labour movement, together with its main newspaper *Social-Demokraten*, came out in strong opposition to all Western and Finnish plans for intervention against Soviet Russia. Mannerheim's being passed over in favour of Ståhlberg as Finland's first President was welcomed by the Left as an important and far-reaching change in Finnish political attitudes, and as one signalling the end of Helsinki being what was described as a hotbed of intrigue between the Western powers and the White Russians. The implications of the presidential election for Finland's domestic politics were also stressed, with the choice of the moderate Ståhlberg seen as marking the end of the state of limbo which had afflicted Finnish political life since the end of the Civil War the previous year.[197]

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195. SvD 20.8., 26.10., 1.11.1919; DN 25.7.1919; StT 26.7.1919.
196. Abl 28.1., 29.1., 26.7., 25.10.1919.
197. Soc-Dem 28.7., 30.10.1919.

The end of the First World War saw an upswing in attempts by certain sections of Swedish opinion to strengthen Sweden's ties with Finland's Swedish-speaking population. This reflected both the heightened sympathy towards national minorities typical of the period and a more particular concern that the Swedish-speaking minority in Finland was coming under increasing pressure from the country's newly-assertive Finnish-speaking majority. 'Riksföreningen för svenskhetens bevarande i utlandet', an organisation devoted to furthering the interests of Swedish-speaking populations abroad, was particularly prominent in these efforts to develop new links with Finland, setting up a local office in Helsinki at the beginning of 1919. A special weekly supplement, devoted to Finnish affairs and aimed at consolidating links between mainland Sweden and the Swedish-speaking areas in Finland, also began to be published at about the same time by *Aftonbladet*. In addition to its other virtues, this also offered Finland-Swedes a convenient forum for airing their concerns about the future and sounding out suggestions and ideas designed to improve the future security of their minority position in Finnish society.[198]

The main focus of German interest in the aftermath of the Allied victory lay with the Paris peace negotiations and subsequently with the terms and implementation of the Versailles agreement, a fact which left little room for concern with other issues. The lifting of the Western blockade on German foreign trade in the summer of 1919, however, with its promise of restoring the German economy to something of its previous strength, had the effect of widening German foreign policy interests. Finland's willingness to re-establish trading links, albeit as a neutral partner rather than as a close ally, was greeted with some warmth in Berlin.[199] Those papers which had aligned themselves behind the new German government expressed no great sadness at the replacement of Finland's pro-German generation of politicians, although little was known of what to expect from the largely centrist figures which had emerged in their stead. Something of a more positive

198. Abl (Veckoupplagga för Finland) 11.1., 8.2.1919; SvT 6.12.1918.
199. Paasivirta 1968, p. 84.

sympathy towards Finland continued to be forthcoming from conservative and army circles in Germany, dating from Germany's involvement in the Civil War. For the majority of the rest of political opinion in post-war Germany, however, Finland represented little more than yet another small, newly-independent East European country. Finland's role in German thinking had by 1919 significantly faded, replaced to some extent by the countries south of the Gulf of Finland, where German volunteers under General von der Goltz remained active.[200]

Finland's relations with her powerful eastern neighbour were complicated throughout 1919 by the need to take both the White Russian and Bolshevik authorities into consideration in policy planning. The White Russians, with their insistence on the territorial inviolability of Russia's pre-war borders and their reluctance to accept the West's recognition of Finland as an independent state no longer linked to the Russian Empire, posed a particular problem. The emigré Russian leadership in Paris grouped around Le conference politique russe described the Western moves as purely temporary.[201]

White Russian plans for Finland's future were, nevertheless, vague. Defence issues, however, were well to the fore. Plans for the defence of Petrograd, in the event of the White leaders coming to power as a result of a successful interventionary campaign, stressed the strategic need of Russia being able, if necessary, to close the mouth of the Gulf of Finland. Some form of Russian base on the northern shore of the Gulf between Helsinki and Hanko was envisaged as being necessary to effect this. Finland's right to enter into agreements with foreign powers was also to be restricted. The idea of a future defence union between Russia and Finland was similarly broached.[202]

In the case of the Soviet government, the Bolsheviks' main focus of interest had moved away from Finland southwards to the Baltic countries and Central Europe. Some concern was nevertheless felt

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200. Ilvessalo 1959, pp. 38—41. The Deutsch-finnische Vereinigung, with General Goltz as one of its main figures, was active from the early 1920s onwards.
201. *Journal des Débats* 14.3.1919; *The Times* 12.5.1919.
202. Paasivirta 1961, pp. 216—21; Polvinen II 1971, pp. 133—6; Enckell: Anteckningar 30.3., 31.3., 7.4., 19.5.1919 (UM 5 C 6).

about Finland's possible role in the event of an interventionist attack against Petrograd. Mannerheim's activities in support of Finnish participation in intervention and his links with leading Western politicians favourable to the idea were well known to the Soviet authorities. Finland's final decision to refuse a part in Western intervention represented an important development in consolidating the Soviet government's position, as Lenin himself admitted in his survey of the international situation over the past year at the end of 1919.[203]

11. The Soviet-Finnish peace agreement

The Soviet government's success in consolidating its position, and the weakening hold of the various White armies operating in Russia's border areas over the territory they had initially occupied during the course of 1919, saw a gradual, but fundamental change in Western attitudes towards the whole Russian question. The growing strength of the Red Army as an efficient fighting unit and its success in February 1920 in wresting control from the Whites of the whole length of the Murmansk railway line and in expelling Finnish forces from Petsamo only underlined this change in the balance of power within the North-West and elsewhere in Russia.[204] The joint Western decision taken in December 1919 to make no further agreements with any White Russian forces, and the ending of the Western blockade on Soviet-controlled territory in January 1920, marked an important symbolic step in this development.

This change in international attitudes, together with the increasing stability in the Baltic signalled by the signing of a peace agreement between the Soviet and Estonian governments at the beginning of February, did not go unnoticed in Finland, most particularly on the Right.[205] For the latter, developments in Russia meant the collapse of plans for Finnish intervention in cooperation with White forces. Recognition and acceptance of this about-turn,

203. Holodkovsky 1978, p. 149.
204. Jääskeläinen 1961, pp. 268—9.
205. Fredborg 1951, pp. 267, 306—10.

however, proved slow among the hard core of conservative opinion, ideologically committed to opposing Bolshevism at all costs. The growing strength of the Soviet position nevertheless made the possibility of establishing any realistic non-communist alternative within Russia increasingly unlikely.

Relations between the two countries, which had been consistently strained both before the October Revolution and afterwards, had occasionally verged on a state of open hostility, either indirectly as during the Finnish Civil War when the Bolsheviks had supplied arms to the Reds, or more directly as during the Finnish Olonets expedition a little later when the two sides had come into open military confrontation. A number of ugly border incidents had also taken place along the Karelian Isthmus, particularly during the summer of 1919. The border question, together with a more general desire to put bilateral relations on something of a normal footing, eventually served to highlight to both governments the need to negotiate a peace agreement.

As part of an attempt to widen the base of potential political support for an agreement between the two countries, Ståhlberg made a number of efforts to sound out the possibilities of including the Right, in the shape of the National Coalition Party, in a new government. These moves led to the formation of a new non-socialist coalition government under Rafael Erich in March 1920.[206] Opinion within the National Coalition Party, however, was far from united in favour of peace negotiations. While Erich, Ingman and Paasikivi supported cooperation with the other parliamentary parties for an agreement, Svinhufvud remained opposed to any treaty with the Bolsheviks as a matter of principle.[207] Similar strong opposition towards peace negotiations was also typical of the leadership of the Swedish People's Party.

The efforts of Erich's Foreign Minister, Rudolf Holsti, to acquire some form of foreign diplomatic support before beginning any negotiations failed to come to anything. Discussions with the Polish leadership under Pilsudsky on the issue proved fruitless, with the Poles determined to remain non-aligned and retain their

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206. Lindman 1937, pp. 108—11, 115—28.
207. See Svinhufvud's communication of 8.1.1920 to J. K. Paasikivi (Ingman collection B 5:2). Also US 21.2.1920.

freedom of manoeuvre in the East. Holsti's contacts with various Western governments also failed to provide the backing that had been hoped for, with no Western country proving willing to commit itself to putting any pressure on the Soviet authorities on Finland's behalf, or to supporting Finnish proposals on the line of the final Soviet-Finnish border.[208]

An all-party committee was set up by the government on 16 April to take charge of preparing the groundwork for the Finnish delegation at the future negotiations, in the hope of guaranteeing as large a measure of advance parliamentary support for the government's position as possible. Divisions between the parties were most evident on the question of Finland's eastern border, although there was general agreement on the desire to annex Petsamo on the Arctic Ocean. While the Social Democrats were willing to accept the historical border dating from the 1617 Peace of Stolbova, leaving East Karelia completely in Soviet hands, their non-socialist colleagues were virtually united in demanding that the question of the area's possible annexation to Finland should be brought up for discussion at the talks.[209]

Two developments, the about-turn of Soviet success in the Soviet-Polish conflict and the declaration of the establishment of the Karelian People's Commune in East Karelia, both indirectly serving to strengthen the Soviet negotiating position, were to significantly overshadow the peace talks when they finally got under way in Tartu in Estonia on 12 June. The capture of Kiev by the Red Army, until then occupied by the Poles, and the beginning of a powerful offensive westwards by Soviet forces towards the Polish heartland marked a major improvement in Soviet fortunes. News of the founding of the Karelian People's Commune on 8 June in East Karelia under the leadership of Edvard Gylling, one of the leading figures in the Red leadership during the Civil War who had fled to Sweden in the wake of the White victory, could have left the Finns in no doubt that, after granting the area regional autonomy, the Bolshevik authorities would be unwilling to discuss its possible future as part of Finland.

The border question nevertheless quickly became the main subject of debate and the main bone of contention between the two

208. K. Holsti 1963, pp. 115—8.
209. Ibid., pp. 119—21; Tanner 1949, pp. 33—5.

negotiating parties at the talks in Tartu. The Finnish government and the Finnish delegation, led by Paasikivi in close association with Tanner, remained committed to trying to obtain some border adjustment in Finland's favour in the East. This intransigence on the part of the Finns ultimately led to the talks coming to a virtual halt in July, and to increased pressure from the socialist and other more moderate members of the Finnish negotiating team for a reassessment of the wisdom of Finnish attitudes on the whole question of territorial claims.[210] Pressure also came from Paasikivi himself and Rudolf Walden, who were concerned that too long a delay might hinder opening up trade with Soviet Russia.

The apparent change in fortunes in the struggle between Soviet Russia and Poland over the summer, which saw the Red Army forced to initiate large-scale withdrawals in the latter half of August, despite its success in advancing to within striking distance of Warsaw, however, served to strengthen Finnish determination to stand by the country's previous demands. The extensive discussion of the peace terms which re-emerged in the Finnish press at the beginning of September in the wake of this development saw repeated demands by the Right for Finland to defend her interests at all costs and to refuse to relinquish either Repola or Porajärvi, occupied during the Finnish expedition into Olonets Karelia.

Ståhlberg, who ultimately determined the extent of possible Finnish proposals at the talks, considered Finnish access to Petsamo as of central importance and was willing to accept ceding Repola and Porajärvi, but opposed any territorial concessions on the Karelian Isthmus.[211] Ståhlberg's flexibility on the East Karelian question finally broke the ice, and led to the signing of an agreement on 14 October. The Soviet-Finnish agreement increased the number of treaties signed between the Soviet authorities and the various countries along Russia's western border to four, in addition to the provisional agreement with Poland.

As might have been expected, the subsequent debate on the Tartu treaty in the Finnish Parliament proved highly contentious, revealing substantial differences of opinion on both the actual

210. J. Paavolainen 1979, pp. 335—40; Tanner 1949, pp. 79—89, 94.
211. J. Paavolainen 1979, pp. 332—3, 339, 357—60; Tanner 1949, pp. 134, 144, 150—2, 178; Kekkonen 1968, pp. 59—60.

content of the agreement and more generally on the wisdom of coming to any peace settlement with the Soviet authorities. The National Progressives, the Social Democrats, part of the National Coalition Party and the bulk of the press, which devoted wide-scale coverage to the issue, aligned themselves behind the agreement. *Helsingin Sanomat* emerged as the main defender of the treaty. While not loudly advocating its virtues, it repeatedly stressed that the treaty was satisfactory. The very fact of a treaty between the two countries was important, in the paper's view, and marked an important step forward, even despite the fact that it could be no guarantee that the Soviet Union might not attack Finland at some time in the future. *Karjalan Aamulehti*, in its defence of the treaty, hinted that it might have been possible to negotiate a more favourable agreement had the government been willing to act faster, and had the Right not proved so opposed to any form of compromise.[212]

The Social Democrats proved the most optimistic of the parties, considering the treaty the best possible in the circumstances and, by taking account of both countries' interests, as having a fair to good chance of surviving the test of time. Above all, the agreement was seen as consolidating the international situation in the northern Baltic and as marking an end to Finland's tacit attachment to the White Russian cause, and a recognition of the Soviet authorities as Russia's permanent government.[213] Initial reaction within the Agrarian Party to the treaty, in contrast, was one of dissatisfaction, particularly on the question of Finnish claims to East Karelia, reflecting the strength of nationalist sentiment within the party's ranks. During the course of the parliamentary debate, however, the party, under Alkio's tutelage, decided to back the agreement, which for all its shortcomings was nevertheless seen as going some way towards clarifying the confused political situation in Europe and establishing Finland's position.[214]

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212. HS 7.10., 12.10., 16.10., 30.10.1920; *Karjalan Aamulehti* 6.10., 15.10.1920.
213. SS 15.10., 26.10.1920; *Kansan Työ* 2.10., 16.10.1920. See also J. W. Keto's and Hannes Ryömä's speeches in Parliament on 28.10.1920 (VP 1920, ptk., pp. 1050, 1052, 1059).
214. Mylly 1978, pp. 113—7. See also the speeches made by Santeri Alkio and Antti Juutilainen in Parliament on 28.11. and 30.11.1920 (VP 1920, ptk., pp. 1063, 1494, 1499).

Opposition to the treaty was strongest within the National Coalition Party and the Swedish People's Party. A significant number of the former's members, however, including Lauri Ingman and Ernst Nevanlinna in addition to the Prime Minister, Rudolf Erich, and Paasikivi, the leader of the Finnish delegation in Tartu, supported acceptance of the agreement. Echoing Alkio, Ingman argued that the treaty would help stabilise conditions in the Finnish area, and that the fact that the Bolsheviks had clearly established themselves as the dominant political force in Russia had to be accepted. Nevanlinna similarly suggested that Finland had achieved everything possible, given the unequal balance of power between the two negotiating parties. As one of those strongly critical or wholly opposed to the treaty, E. N. Setälä concentrated his attack on the failure of the Finnish negotiators to come away from Tartu with any concrete Russian concession on the East Karelia question. Setälä was joined by Theodor Homén and Tekla Hultin, who both drew attention to the continuing Bolshevik threat to Finland and the dangers inherent in undermining the achievement of the White victory. Forthright opposition to the treaty was also voiced in a number of rural newspapers associated with the party.[215]

Criticism of the treaty within the Swedish People's Party concentrated less on the actual details of the agreement and more on the implicit recognition of the Bolshevik régime it symbolised. A more moderate stance was taken by the leading Swedish-language newspaper, *Hufvudstadsbladet* which, together with *Wasabladet*, considered an agreement with the Soviet authorities as being in Finland's, as well as Russia's other neighbours' best interests, and as likely to protect Finland from the dangers inherent in adopting a go it alone policy.[216]

The Tartu agreement was finally approved by Parliament after lengthy debate on 1 December by a majority of 163-27, a division of

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215. US 9.10., 31.10.1920; *Vaasa* 5.10., 9.10., 15.10.1920; *Karjala* 15.10., 28.10., 29.10., 2.11.1920; *Iltalehti* 27.10.1920. See also the speeches in Parliament made by Rafael Erich, Ingman, Setälä, Homén and Hultin on 28.10. and 30.11.1920 (VP 1920, ptk., pp. 1047—8, 1056, 1060, 1478, 1486). Also Rommi 1974, p. 14.

216. Hbl 15.10.1920; DPr 19.10.1920; SvT 25.10.1920; Wbl 19.10., 19.11.1920. See also Estlander's and Colliander's speeches in Parliament on 28.10. and 26.11.1920 (VP 1920, ptk., pp. 1049—50, 1423).

votes which closely reflected that which had emerged some eighteen months earlier in the debate over acceptance of the republican constitution. Despite the obvious differences between the two issues, they both highlighted the difficulty which right-wing circles, and in particular Swedish-speaking politicians, experienced in coming to terms with the balance of political power brought by parliamentary government, which favoured, at least temporarily, centre and centre-right policies rather than more conservative strategies.

Official ratification of the Tartu treaty was quickly followed the same month by an invitation for Finland to become a member of the League of Nations, representing a further international recognition of Finnish independence. Of the newly-independent states, only Poland and Czechoslovakia, both countries with close links to the West, had previously been admitted to the new international organisation. Decisions on membership for the three Baltic republics and a number of other small states continued to be postponed indefinitely.

V Independent Finland's Foreign Relations During the 1920s

1. Europe and the new post-war international balance of power

The Europe which emerged out of the ruins of the First World War and the inter-connecting network of treaties imposed on the defeated countries rewriting their national borders was one very different from its pre-war forebear. The new-found ascendancy of the Western powers following the defeat of Germany, Austro-Hungary and Russia, the emergence of a number of new independent states, and the establishment of an isolated but ideologically-dangerous Bolshevik government in Russia in the wake of the October Revolution, all represented aspects of this new balance of power, and one containing within it the seeds of fresh confrontation and tension. The wind of change was felt most acutely in Central Europe, where the defeated countries of the region found themselves faced with the challenge created by the emergence of newly-independent countries such as Poland and Czechoslovakia, both by-products of the Wilsonian doctrine of self-determination, but in reality ethnically heterogeneous, rather than homogeneous nation-states.[1] Typical of the new post-war status quo and of the new-found role of the West in deter-

1. Bracher 1975, pp. 22—30.

mining European political developments was the grouping which emerged under French tutelage, linking France, Poland and Czechoslovakia, as a result of the military agreement signed between France and Poland in 1921 and the treaty of alliance signed between France and Czechoslovakia in 1924. This was further reinforced by the alliance network which had developed slightly earlier between Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Yugoslavia during 1920 and 1921 to counter possible Hungarian pressure.

Severe dislocations were also evident in the post-war European economy. The general process of reconstruction and recovery was compounded by the heavy indebtedness of both Britain and France to the United States as a result of the war. Debate and uncertainty also continued over the quantity and nature of Germany's war reparations. The sharp disagreements on this latter issue eventually led to open crisis and the occupation of the German Rhineland at the beginning of 1923 by French and Belgian forces. Germany herself suffered massive inflation, bringing the country to the edge of economic catastrophe.[2] Major difficulties were also encountered in the Danube basin, where the emergence of new independent states and the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian empire had led to the drawing of a mass of new national borders and the parallel erection of new customs barriers, all of which had the effect of fragmenting what had traditionally been a single unified trading area and creating new unforseen complications for the economies of the new nation-states in the region.

In terms of political development, the end of the First World War saw a general breakthrough for the forces of parliamentarism and democracy. The political system adopted in Poland and the three Baltic republics reflected a strong bias towards parliamentary-based forms of government, while Czechoslovakia and Finland incorporated strong presidential powers into their new constitutions. Hopes for social and other reforms were also particularly strong following the years of political limbo imposed by the First World War. Extensive programmes of land reform of varying sorts were instituted throughout Eastern Europe, from Finland down to the Balkans.

Those elements within European societies committed to violent

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2. Renouvin VII 1957, pp. 234—8; Eyck I 1954, pp. 312—30, 409—18.

revolution and the overthrow of capitalism remained for the major part in a clear minority, both at a national level and also, almost without exception, within the labour movement as a whole. The Communist International (Comintern) set up in Moscow in March 1919 representing national communist parties, the French and German parties being among the most prominent, failed to acquire a real or effective measure of control over socialist politics outside Russia. Within more moderate left-wing opinion, the restoration of international ties between the European social democratic parties or their equivalents, many of which had experienced a significant expansion in their numbers of supporters, progressed slowly. Closer ties tended to be hindered by the deadweight of past national wartime allegiances, and the overall direction of ideological changes in the post-war world. The more moderate parties initially allied themselves with the reactivated Second International, while the more radical parties, favouring some form of cooperation with the Communist International, including the powerful Austrian Socialist Party, took part in the activities of the separate Vienna International founded in 1921, until the two were united in 1923 to form the Labour and Socialist International.[3]

Soviet Russia, its attention focused almost exclusively on grappling with its own massive internal problems, assumed a low international profile in the early post-war years. The relief brought by the removal of the restrictions imposed by the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty following the German defeat was short-lived, with the country soon plunged into a civil war between the Red Army and White, Western-supported forces in large areas of the country's border regions, which only served to put further strain on Russia's already overstretched economy. The end of the Civil War, although marking the end of the worst disruptions affecting the country, failed to eliminate unrest altogether. Instead, compounded with a general war weariness, it provoked a strong wave of criticism and dissatisfaction towards the Bolshevik authorities, which reached a peak in the Kronstadt rebellion of March 1921.

After succeeding in putting down this threat to its authority, the Soviet government under Lenin's direction decided on a radical change of economic policy, in the shape of the adoption of the

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3. Borkenau 1938, pp. 161—3, 167, 199—201; Paasivirta II 1955, pp. 114—6.

NEP. This new programme opened the way for what amounted to a mixed economy. While control of major industrial production remained in the hands of the state, significant freedom was given to the private sector, and the peasants allowed to retain independent ownership over their smallholdings. From a political point of view, however, in contrast to this easing of economic direction, control from the centre was actually increased. A complete freeze was imposed on the activities of the other socialist parties, the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries.[4] After adopting the NEP, Soviet Russia also embarked on a process of developing its commercial links with Europe. Peace agreements with the country's western neighbours, the last with Poland, with which a treaty was signed in Riga in March 1921, were followed by preparations for opening up wider links with the West. The Rapallo agreement, signed between Soviet Russia and Germany in April 1922, reflected an attempt by both countries, isolated from their immediate neighbours, to provide themselves with a measure of joint security and a greater degree of international manoeuvrability than either had previously been able to achieve.[5]

The founding of the League of Nations, with its aims of eliminating the type of secretive diplomacy characteristic of previous decades and advancing the cause of national self-determination and the rights of national identity for minority peoples, had initially been seen in many quarters as signalling a new direction in post-war European politics. The fact, however, that the League had been founded on virtually solely Western initiative and that the defeated countries were only gradually accepted as members, and Germany, the last, only in 1926, gave the new international organisation an unambiguously Western bias at odds with its impartial independent aspirations. The League failed, as a result, to develop into a forum capable of injecting any significant degree of balance into relations between the victors and the defeated, or one willing to review the peace treaties drawn up at the end of the war. It was further weakened in its potential to influence events by

4. Carr II 1952, pp. 273—9, 292—317; Deutscher 1978, pp. 194—5.
5. Fischer 1960, pp. 176—82, 196—7; Kennan 1961, pp. 209, 222—8; Deutscher 1978, pp. 334—5.

the fact that both the United States and the Soviet Union remained outside its activities.

The 'Sturm und Drang' period immediately following the end of the war lasted until about the end of 1921, by which time, although the major post-war problems remained far from finally settled, the overall international situation had nevertheless calmed appreciably.[6] It was not until 1924, however, that a new stage in European political developments, particularly in the western half of Europe, one representing a new departure in thinking on the question of international relations and symbolised in large part by the Geneva protocol proposal, can really be said to have begun. The latter, approved by the assembly of the League of Nations in the autumn of 1924 on the initiative of the British and French Prime Ministers, Ramsay Macdonald and Edouard Herriot, condemning wars of aggression and calling for the use of mediation and international arbitration in solving interstate conflicts, failed, despite the high hopes it evoked, however, to be ever implemented, largely because of the opposition of Britain's subsequent Baldwin-led government. Despite its failure, the protocol proposal, by virtue of its content, nevertheless continued to have an indirect influence on future developments.

Similar ideas to those in the Geneva proposal had been central in the Dawes plan drawn up shortly earlier in the spring of 1924, covering the organisation of German war reparations. The success of this represented a victory for the attempts of Ramsay MacDonald's government to reduce the gulf existing between the victorious Allied powers and the defeated countries, and a blow to advocates of the type of hard-line politics represented by the then French government under Poincaré. When the latter was replaced in May 1924 by a new administration under Herriot, it became possible to talk of a significant and extensive change in the European political climate.

After a solution had been reached on the thorny reparations question amenable to the United States, important because of America's central role in granting large loans to Germany, it became possible to begin discussions between the Western powers and the German government on political issues. These eventually

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6. Bracher 1975, pp. 59—63, 85—7; Borkenau 1938, p. 221.

led to the Locarno agreements of the autumn of 1925, in which Germany, under the foreign policy leadership of Gustav Stresemann, recognised as permanent the post-war borders running along the Rhine between Germany, France and Belgium. The signing of the Locarno agreements also opened the way for the acceptance of Germany as a member of the League of Nations, which took place in the autumn of 1926.[7]

The Locarno agreements were to have far-reaching implications in contributing to a further stabilisation of the political situation in Western Europe and, more indirectly, in underpinning the prestige and influence of the League of Nations. No comparable agreements, however, proved forthcoming concerning Germany's relations with her eastern neighbours. No formal recognition or international guarantees were agreed regarding the permanence of these eastern borders, beyond an affirmation by the respective countries to use arbitration and negotiation to guarantee the peaceful solution of interstate conflicts. This lack of symmetry between the diplomatic solutions arrived at in the East and West was closely linked to Stresemann's aim of ensuring the immutability of Germany's western borders, but at the same time leaving the door open, as he saw it, to future possible modifications of those in the East.[8] Largely as a result of Stresemann's western-orientated foreign policy, Germany was able to resume an active role on the European political scene from the mid-1920s onwards.

The signing of the Locarno Pact agreements also contributed to the creation of a certain Locarno spirit, the proponents of which argued that, with the gulf between the victors and the defeated in Europe narrowing, the danger of renewed open conflict had been significantly reduced. This development, however, was restricted to Western Europe and excluded the Soviet Union. From the Soviet point of view, the Locarno agreements represented something of a set-back to its own policies, as in Soviet thinking they were considered to be part of a wider, more general attempt to create a common front against the Soviet Union.[9] Since Rapallo, Soviet policy had continued to be primarily focused on ways of protecting the Soviet state from any possible delayed

7. Walters 1960, pp. 262—76.
8. Maxelon 1972, pp. 195—206.
9. Fischer 1960, pp. 443—4; Kennan 1961, pp. 278—9.

repercussions of earlier Western interventionist policies, and consolidating its relations with the outside world, as in the case of its offers of non-aggression treaties to the Baltic republics and Finland.

The period from the mid-1920s onwards has often been described as marking one of an almost idyllic calm in European politics, to underline the change that occurred in the area following the conclusion of the immediate post-war years and which was most obviously evident in the process of stabilisation which took place in Western Europe and the position of the small states. Parallel to this, the strengthening of the status of the League of Nations in European minds saw the question of disarmament brought increasingly to the fore and become the subject of extensive debate and diplomatic activity. Much of this focused around the contentious question of whether the consolidation of general security was the major necessary prerequisite for disarmament, or whether disarmament itself was the key to increasing collective security. The debate and disagreement surrounding these ideas were the cause of much argument and dispute, and prevented practical progress on the whole issue, both internationally and within Europe in particular.[10] Characteristic both of these difficulties and the general will to achieve some form of international accord typical of the latter half of the 1920s was the Kellogg-Briand pact outlined between the United States and France. Formally condemning the use of war as a tool of diplomacy and a way of advancing national interests, the pact was ratified by some fifty states between its first promulgation in the autumn of 1928 and the end of the decade.[11]

2. Domestic tensions

The years surrounding independence had seen Finnish society experience a period of major transformation, one which had embraced not only the gaining of national independence but also the political and social upheavals of the Civil War, and a long

10. Walters 1960, pp. 143—5, 217—30, 363—76.
11. Ibid., pp. 372—3, 384—7.

period of wrangling over the inter-related questions of the shape of the country's new constitution and the direction of future foreign policy. This transition period, although relatively short, was to have a powerful influence on political and social developments during the 1920s and throughout the whole of the inter-war years. The various widely conflicting and often highly selective interpretations put on the events surrounding independence by the different political parties played a significant part in deepening the divisions within society which had gained such prominence during 1917 and 1918, and for long prevented the emergence of any real sense of national unity or political consensus.

As a result of her peripheral role in the First World War, Finland had been spared the type of severe economic disruption which had affected those countries more directly involved in the conflict. Even the Civil War, despite its wide geographical extent, had seen only Tampere and Viipuri suffer any real material destruction. The main body of the country's industrial infrastructure had remained largely untouched by the troubles. Industrial activity in southern Finland outside Tampere and Viipuri had only been partially disrupted, even at the peak of the conflict.[12] Post-war reconstruction, therefore, was of a relatively small order. The major changes which had taken place in Finland's foreign trade nevertheless saw the economy put under some strain, as it came to terms with the challenges brought by the country's new foreign markets.

The early years of the 1920s saw the introduction of a quantity of important new domestic legislation, affecting compulsory education, the freedom of religion, military service and land reform, as part of the process of remoulding the country to fit its new independent status. The school system, in line with the extension of compulsory education, expanded with the spread of elementary schools into rural areas. The number of secondary schools, including private coeducational schools, also grew substantially. In the realm of higher education, Helsinki University was joined in the early years of independence by two new private universities, the Swedish-language Åbo Akademi, founded in

12. Suomen Virallinen Tilasto XXXII. Sosiaalisia erikoistutkimuksia I — Marraskuun lakko 1917 ja kapina v. 1918.

1919, and the Finnish-language Turku University, founded a year later.[13] The most important social reforms enacted in the years following independence covered the question of rural land ownership. In an effort to eliminate some of the most obvious social problems surrounding the land question and which had played such a part in exacerbating tensions in the period prior to the Civil War, a law enabling leasehold farmers to purchase the land they worked was passed in the autumn of 1918, and resulted in the establishment of over 100,000 independent smallholdings replacing earlier leasehold farms during the 1920s. This reform was subsequently complemented by an additional piece of legislation known as the Lex Kallio, passed in 1922, designed to further ease the acquisition of additional land by new smallholders.

No significant social reforms, however, were introduced covering the industrial sector or the conditions of the industrial labour force and labour relations, despite the relatively underdeveloped nature of legislation in the field compared, for example, to that existing in neighbouring Sweden. Labour relations in industry and other sectors of the economy remained heavily weighted in favour of employers, who tended to exercise an often patriarchal style of management. In many senses, nineteenth-century traditions, both in management and labour legislation, continued virtually unchanged. While a number of larger employers did provide social benefits, such as company housing, for their employees out of their own pockets, this departed relatively little from the traditional, *noblesse oblige*-coloured approach to social issues typical of previous generations, bypassing officially legislated and negotiated social policy.

The size of the civil service and administrative machine inevitably grew during the early years of independence, partly as a result of the new responsibilities covering the country's defence and foreign policy, which had been previously in Russian hands and which now fell to the Finnish authorities to handle, and partly as a result of a general increase in governmental administrative activity and the expansion of education. Levels of pay within the civil service nevertheless soon fell to below that enjoyed by

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13. Suomen Kulttuurihistoria III, pp. 113—4, 139—40.

officials during the nineteenth century, a fact which contributed to a general fall in the status of government employees within society, and one which was marked by a growth in popular opposition to what was seen as the dead hand of government. This was particularly evident on the Left and within the Agrarian Party, encouraged in the former by class conflict thinking and in the latter by traditional rural resentment towards the upper classes and urban-based authority. The major change which had taken place within the structure of local government following the shift towards more democratic representative methods and away from a centrally-nominated form of regional administration as a result of the 1917 law on universal suffrage for local government elections, went some way to tempering the most radical aspects of this anti-government sentiment. The more open form of local government, based on locally-elected town and rural councils, which emerged in the 1920s not only brought democracy closer to the people, but also encouraged wider popular participation in local issues.

There was, however, little escaping the mass of social tensions and political and ideological divisions inherited from the pre-independence and immediate post-independence periods, all of which continued to engender and reinforce a network of rigid and uncompromising social and political attitudes stretching across virtually the whole of society. The division of society into 'whites' and 'reds' and the political rhetoric which went with it, inherited from the time of the Civil War, proved particularly persistent, and remained a feature of political debate and comment throughout much of the 1920s. Extending beyond politics to affect everyday attitudes and social interaction, it served to deepen the gulf already existing between the two halves of society, creating widespread political and social suspicion and mistrust.

Every effort was made by the Right, both in print and in public speeches made on such occasions as Independence and Army Day, to underline the role the White army had played in securing independence against the threat which had been posed by the 'Bolshevik-inspired' rebels. The White victory was also consistently described, from a more international perspective, as having marked a brake on the spread of revolution into Europe and as having been instrumental in saving Scandinavia, in particular, from the ravages of social upheaval. A large amount of literature on the 'War of Liberation', as the Civil War was referred to on the

Right, appeared throughout the early 1920s. Restricting its interest more or less exclusively to the events of the spring of 1918 and avoiding any real analysis of the earlier stages of the conflict or its origins, this concentrated on lauding the achievements of the Whites and emphasising the view of the Civil War as primarily one of liberation from the threat of Communism and Russian hegemony. Less enthusiasm for the more extreme aspects of this style of interpretation of recent history was evident from within the centre parties which, although agreeing in principle with the value of the White victory, tended to fear that, taken too far, these views would seriously undermine the policy of national conciliation and compromise they advocated.

The Right's continued identification of the White victory with the consolidation of independence was bitterly resented throughout the Left, despite the split which existed among its ranks towards the wisdom of the socialists' actions in 1918 in deciding on a policy of social revolution, as only serving to reinforce class divisions and ultimately intended to prevent the Left from achieving any real measure of political respectability. While the moderates within the labour movement tended to restrict themselves to arguing for a more conciliatory and united approach to recent history and the ending of political discrimi-nation against the Left, the more radical elements on the Left, with their closer sympathies with the actions of the Red leadership in 1918 and greater commitment to a future popular uprising, remained significantly more hostile towards conservative interpretations of the Civil War and critical of the hold they gained over much of society.

The Right, with its continual emphasis on the importance of maintaining the values and ideals which had been secured by the White victory in the Civil War, stressed what it saw as its own central role in maintaining the existing political and social balance against what was seen as the labour movement's commitment to undermining, if not actually destroying the status quo. The Right showed itself particularly susceptible to fears of a second uprising masterminded by the Left; in fact, almost any activity by the Left involving significant numbers of participants tended automatically to be interpreted as presaging social unrest and potential revolution. Political agitation was divined at every turn and seen as being inspired, if not directed by the Bolshevik authorities

across the border. Little attempt was made to connect unrest with internal domestic social conditions or popular dissatisfaction with the development of Finnish society. This encouraged a belief in the importance of keeping a close watch on potential trouble spots and subversive activity in order to prevent their spreading and posing a wider threat to society.[14] Defence of the country's independence and internal social structure came to be seen on the Right, in the light of the experience of the Civil War, as closely inter-related issues. This resulted in questions of a party's or individual politician's political 'reliability', on both domestic and foreign policy issues, coming to be assessed largely exclusively in terms of their domestic political loyalties.[15] Despite their relatively small representation in Parliament, amounting to some 50 seats at the 1919 elections shared between the National Coalition and Swedish People's Parties, right-wing views gained added strength and influence from the fact that the country's administration, army, Civil Guard and major economic and cultural institutions were all strongly conservative in nature and outlook.

The defeat of its much-advocated idea of a monarchy in favour of a republican constitution had come as a bitter blow to the Right. The decline in conservative political influence this appeared to symbolise had only been reinforced by the failure of Mannerheim to be elected as the country's first President and Ståhlberg's election in his stead. While a number of leading National Coalition Party politicians proved relatively quickly willing to come to terms with the new republic, among them J. K. Paasikivi, who publicly expressed his loyalty and acceptance of Ståhlberg at the beginning of August 1919, Rafael Erich and Lauri Ingman, there remained a number of leading figures on the Right who refused to drop either their sharp criticism of the ideal of parliamentary democracy or of the new political establishment.[16] These included many of those who had been prominent on the political scene in earlier years and particularly during the spring of 1918, and who now considered that they had been unjustly passed over. Finnish society had traditionally reflected a strong

14. See for ex. G. v. Bonsdorff 1947, pp. 38—42, 50—1.
15. Paasivirta 1966, p. 73.
16. US 6.8.1919.

respect for social status and academic achievement favourable to political and social élitism, and against this background it was only natural that there was strong resistance in certain circles to the whole concept of modern democracy, with its emphasis on equality of rights and opportunities. Much of this critical reaction, which was most evident within the ranks of the National Coalition Party and the Swedish People's Party, was directed against the new mass parties, not only on the Left but also in the Centre.

The National Coalition Party itself, however, was far from internally united, with an increasing gulf emerging between the older and younger wings of the party, one especially highlighted at party conferences over policy on language and national issues. The older generation, under the leadership of E. N. Setälä, typically advocated a policy of moderation on the heated language issue and the position of the country's Swedish-speaking minority, while the younger generation tended to favour more radical demands for a more avowedly nationalist Finnish-speaking state. Despite the often loud criticism of the latter group, however, the established moderate party line was maintained for much of the decade until the 1927 party conference, when more radically conservative elements within the party were able to gain significant ground.

For those occupying the political middle-ground, the continued division of society between an uncompromising Left and Right represented a trend which was seen as ultimately destructive to the positive development of Finnish society. For all their condemnation of the 'Red Rebellion', as the Civil War continued to be referred to by those in the Centre, and for all their concern not to downplay its continued influence on Finnish society, the overall trend of liberal policies, with few exceptions, was based on the underlying theme of the need for national conciliation and the idea that the elimination of internal hostilities and conflicts was of central importance in establishing a more stable and secure future.

The National Progressive Party's close association with the republican ideal during the decisive months of 1919, and which had closely matched the mood of the time, had represented the party's strongest card. Following the conclusion of the debate over the constitution and the acceptance of a republican form of government, the party was deprived of its major vote-catcher, and lost a significant proportion of its support in the 1922 elections as a

result. Its number of seats fell from 26 to 15, with the departure of those who, while supporting the republican ideal, had never felt any great sympathy towards liberalism in its wider sense. The Progressives were handicapped by their lack of identification with any particular interest group capable of guaranteeing their political base and their inability to look to support from any powerful institutions or organisations comparable to that enjoyed by the Right.[17] The party lost further ground in the later 1920s, particularly in East Finland, to the expanding Agrarian Party. Despite this drop in their popularity, the Progressives were nevertheless able to retain an important parliamentary position as a result of the proportional voting system and the need for coalition governments, given the inability of any single party to command an absolute parliamentary majority.

The number of Agrarian Party members in Parliament grew slowly but steadily during the 1920s, from a total of 45 seats in 1922 to 52 seats in 1927. The party's growth from being a minor party of smallholders to a major party of independent farmers was closely linked to the changes in the composition of rural society brought about by the new land reform legislation introduced in the early 1920s, and the improvements it ushered in in the conditions of the rural electorate. From the very first years of independence, the Agrarian Party came to occupy a virtually continuous place in government. This strengthened both the party's parliamentary significance and the confidence of the party's leadership, and made the party the subject of much political courting by various interest groups. On the negative side, however, it also created some tensions and difficulties for the relatively inexperienced party leadership.[18] The other non-socialist parties had little choice but to come to terms with the new power and influence wielded by the Agrarians. The prevailing atmosphere of the period, with its emphasis on rural peasant values as the cornerstones of Finnish identity, and rural society as the ideal type of Finnish society, also served to consolidate the overall position of the Agrarians. In the eyes of Agrarian politicians and party supporters, the other non-socialist parties tended to be seen, in line with traditional rural

17. G. v. Bonsdorff 1947, pp. 61—6.
18. Mylly 1978, pp. 41—52.

attitudes towards government and the political establishment, as representing essentially urban values and as being sympathetic to the traditional ruling élite, and less than fully committed to the creation of an avowedly Finnish society and national identity.[19]

The Right, in making its declared intention that of defending the values secured by the Civil War and the defeat of socialism it symbolised, was not slow to use its demand for the need for uncompromising politics in attacking the centre parties, which were consistently criticised for their lack of determined resistance to the Left. Even such essentially liberal papers as *Turun Sanomat* and *Karjalan Aamulehti* were not infrequently described in the more right-wing press as having betrayed the non-socialist cause. These outbursts by the Right were typically interpreted by moderate opinion as clear indications of the former's fundamental hostility towards the whole fabric of parliamentary democracy, and were often countered by references to the Right's earlier commitment to a monarchial constitution, a policy about which the Right had become increasingly sensitive, and wished forgotten.[20]

A strong emphasis on national values and national identity, and linked with it a tendency to see the interests of the Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking populations as essentially incompatible, played a particularly visible part in the early years of independence. This powerful stress on national identity was a common feature typical of the growing pains experienced by many of the newly-independent states of Europe, such as Poland and Czechoslovakia. Overall developments in many of the new small states of Europe, in fact, exhibited surprisingly similar trends, despite the very local nature of the individual historical and political strands going to make up each country's sense of national and ethnic identity.

The various attempts made to underline a sense of Finnish identity to complement national independence, and stress the importance of the Finnish language as the ideal medium of expressing that identity, were linked to the feeling of self-confi-

19. Ibid., pp. 35, 186—7.
20. HS 28.9.1924; US 5.10.1924.

dence which had been born out of the gaining of independence. In defending the virtues of a particularly Finnish view of the world, it was often argued, either directly or indirectly, along lines first broadly put forward by Snellman in the nineteenth century, that only a linguistically homogeneous people, one speaking the same national language, could really be assured of finding a strong sense of national purpose, while bilingualism in any form spelled dangerous compromise. A strong internal national identity, it was thought, would also have the effect of presenting a powerful and united Finnish profile to the outside world.[21]

The renewed activity these ideas inspired in some sections of opinion to reinforce Finnish identity and the dominance of the Finnish language at the expense of Swedish led many Swedish-speakers to conclude that the position of the Swedish-language minority was becoming increasingly threatened, and that to survive the community would need to fight more actively to protect its rights. This was particularly unsettling to the Swedish-speaking establishment as, despite its small overall numbers, it had enjoyed a dominant position in the country's administration during the nineteenth century, and had been and continued to be highly influential in the country's economic and cultural life. The parliamentary reform of 1906 and the introduction of a parliamentary democracy in 1919 had both contributed to making Swedish-speakers, despite the constitutional guarantees that had been made endorsing Finland's bilingual status, increasingly sensitive to feeling themselves threatened by the newly-assertive Finnish-speaking majority and the possibility of future social changes likely to undermine their position.[22]

At the same time as the Swedish-speaking leadership in Helsinki began concentrating its efforts on consolidating and further guaranteeing the community's position, it began to become increasingly evident, and particularly from the beginning of 1919 onwards, that it was gradually losing its traditional authority over the Swedish-speaking population. This development, far from being restricted only to the Åland Islands, whose population had

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21. *Aitosuomalainen* 3/1924, 6/1925, 24.2.1928.
22. On the debate over the Swedish People's Party's policy approach, see the discussions at the 1923 party conference held in Kristiinankaupunki (Nordström 1946, pp. 49—54).

for some time pursued their own strongly regional policies, extended in particular to Swedish-speaking population centres in southern Ostrobothnia. Feeling themselves geographically and otherwise isolated from their linguistic cousins further south, these began to press for a more independent line. In its most extreme form, this had emerged in the hints which had begun to appear as early as December 1918 in a number of Swedish-language papers in Ostrobothnia about the possibility of annexing the area to Sweden, along similar lines to those proposed by the Åland Islands population. Supporters of these ideas backed them up with appeals to the right of minorities to national self-determination, and called for a local referendum to gauge the strength of local opinion on the issue.[23]

The growing internal conflicts within the Swedish-speaking population were further highlighted at the special council of representatives from Swedish-speaking southern Ostrobothnia which was convened in Vaasa in January 1919. At this meeting, Ernst Estlander and Eirik Hornborg, both leading figures in the leadership of the Swedish People's Party, argued strongly that all extreme proposals, such as that covering the possible annexation of the area to Sweden, could only harm the interests of the Swedish-speaking community and would be likely to lead to charges of treachery and to provoke further and dangerous political discrimination against the Swedish-speaking population throughout the country. Thanks largely to the efforts of Edvin Sundqvist, one of the leading moderates opposed to the adoption of extreme policies, the Vaasa meeting finally limited itself to demanding what were termed as international guarantees for the region's Swedish-speaking population, referring only in the most general terms to the possibility of holding a local referendum on the region's future.[24]

The national conference of representatives from the whole of the Swedish-speaking community held in Helsinki in May 1919 responded to these developments in the regions by approving a new outline programme on political and linguistic issues. This new programme put forward the idea of establishing a separate,

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23. *Kaskö Tidning* 11.12.1918; *Pedersöre* 24.12.1918; *Syd-Österbotten* 24.12.1918.
24. G. v. Bonsdorff 1950, pp. 115—6; Hämäläinen 1968, pp. 57—8; *Wasabladet* 8.1.1919; Hbl 10.1., 18.2.1919.

autonomous regional form of government to administer the whole of Swedish-speaking Finland, with the country's various and geographically disparate Swedish-speaking areas grouped together as a federation of canton-type regions. Various other administrative changes designed to secure the integrity and future of Swedish-speaking communities were also proposed, such as the setting-up of a Swedish-speaking diocese, a separate department in the National Schools Board devoted to administering Swedish-language schools, and the founding of separate Swedish-language military units in the army.[25] Perhaps not surprisingly, this plan was never carried out in its entirety, not only because it would have proved highly complicated to implement, but also because it would have undermined national unity at a time when the country could least have afforded it and Finnish-speaking politicians were least willing to compromise. Many of the plan's more modest individual proposals nevertheless did win favour with the country's political leadership, and a number were approved.

The leadership of the Swedish People's Party remained united in its opposition to the idea of the Åland Islands being transferred to Sweden. The possible loss of the Islands to Finland was considered likely to destroy the country's geographical unity and further weaken the overall position of the Swedish-speaking population elsewhere, in addition to reducing its overall size. There was strong support, however, for demands for a wide measure of local autonomy to be granted to the Islands. The demand which had been put forward in Vaasa for special international guarantees as a means of securing the position of the Swedish-speaking population as a whole was rejected as unrealistic by many of the party's leaders. The idea advanced by some Swedish-speaking politicians that the party should only agree to defending the Finnish case for sovereignty over the Åland Islands if approval proved forthcoming over the bulk of the Swedish-speaking community's other demands was also ruled out as likely to be detrimental to the community's case.[26]

Swedish-speaking politicians often found themselves isolated from the bulk of the rest of public opinion during the early years of

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25. G. v. Bonsdorff 1950, pp. 164—84; Hämäläinen 1968, pp. 70—2.
26. Hbl 6.3.1919.

independence. Their opposition to a number of major political developments, such as the approval of a republican constitution, Ståhlberg's choice as President and the ratification of the Tartu peace, consistently found them at odds with the mainstream of political opinion. The thorny question of whether they would be best advised to advance the interests of the Swedish-speaking population by refusing to make any compromises and thereby remain isolated, or whether it would be better to attempt to develop links across the linguistic divide with the rest of Finnish society, proved a major source of contention within the Swedish-speaking political camp. This was particularly evident in the heated argument on the issue which took place at the 1923 conference of the Swedish People's Party. The conciliatory view put forward by the likes of Professor G. G. Rosenqvist and summed up in his statement that, 'A Swedish-speaking community and identity which, to preserve its continued existence, needs to erect walls and moats around it and which fears outside influence, is condemned to destruction', nevertheless failed to win the conference's whole-hearted support.[27]

In Parliament, the party often found itself holding the balance of power. This created its own difficulties, as antipathies were felt towards both the Left and the Right, most strongly nevertheless towards the Left, which tended to be identified by those behind party thinking, in typical conservative fashion, as the major potential source of social disruption and division. On the other hand, both the moderate Finnish-speaking centre parties and the more conservative Right, with their commitment to various forms of a specifically Finnish-language nationalism, were seen as posing a direct, if possibly long-term, danger to the linguistic identity and continued existence of the Swedish-speaking community, and thus also as unattractive partners in any political alliance. Without the support of the Swedish People's Party, however, the non-socialist parties lacked a parliamentary majority, and by skilful use of this position the party leadership hoped that it would be able to gain additional political influence and at the same time be in a position to prevent the passing of what was seen as the most threatening of the legislation directed against the

27. G. G. Rosenqvist 1920, p. 18.

Swedish-speaking minority.[28]

The steady, if somewhat uneven development of radical Finnish sentiment and its growing influence, both in the wider body of society and in the Finnish-speaking non-socialist hierarchy, during the mid-1920s only served to fuel the Swedish-speaking community's growing sense of being under threat.[29] The establishment of the Tanner-led Social Democrat minority government in December 1926 was greeted by *Hufvudstadsbladet*, in sharp contrast to the hostile attitude of much of the rest of non-socialist opinion as reflected in the challenging tones adopted by the National Coalition parliamentary party towards the new administration, with a muted, but not entirely dissatisfied response.[30] Experience had shown Swedish-speaking commentators that the Social Democrats were moderate on the language issue and generally condemned the more extreme forms of radical Finnish nationalism. The difficult political situation in which the Swedish People's Party found itself in as a result of, on the one hand, its traditional conservative leanings and, on the other, its opposition to the radical nationalism gaining ground within Finnish-speaking non-socialist opinion, however, presented its leadership with a continuing problem. This was well reflected in the dispute which blew up over the question between R. A. Wrede, a leading party figure, and the party secretary, Rafael Colliander, following the former's publication of a pamphlet in which, in tones reminiscent of the most uncompromising attitudes current in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War, he described the Social Democrats as enemies of society and as a threat to social order. Colliander countered Wrede's argument, pointing out that it ran against the interests of both the country's Swedish-speaking and Finnish-speaking populations. In observing that elsewhere in Scandinavia social democratic parties were now a powerful and respected political force and that the importance of contacts with Scandinavia to newly-independent Finland could not be ignored, Colliander stressed that Swedish-speaking politicians would do well to follow the Nordic lead and adopt a more constructive

28. Lindman 1937, pp. 61, 121, 223—5, 267, 319, 324—5.
29. Nordström 1946, pp. 54—8.
30. Hbl 12.12.1926; AU 11.12.1926; Wikman 1926, pp. 114—5.

attitude to their socialist colleagues. No conclusive settlement of the problem was reached, however.[31]

The labour movement's potential for effective political activity and for achieving a meaningful role in political decision-making remained small well into the 1920s, as a result of the after-effects of the Civil War. This served to mark Finland off from developments in much of the rest of Europe, where the labour movement had emerged as a major political force to be reckoned with. Two factors, however, served to reanimate the Finnish movement, both ideologically and more practically in organisational terms, and give it renewed vigour; the split within the European Left into separate social democratic and communist wings, and a domestic, critical reassessment of the Finnish movement's involvement in the Civil War.

For those left-wing activists who had moved to Soviet Russia at the end of the Civil War and been associated with the founding of the new Finnish Communist Party, the events of 1918 in Finland were unambiguously seen as part of the historical international class struggle. The reasons for the socialists' failure to gain a victory in 1918 were thoroughly discussed, as in O. W. Kuusinen's pamphlet entitled 'The Finnish Revolution. An evaluation and self-criticism'. Although sharply critical of the movement's failure and drawing attention to the latter's various shortcomings and miscalculations, much of Kuusinen's argument focused, in fact, on the possibility of a renewed uprising. Kuusinen's views, in line with the general optimism of the time within the communist movement as a whole, reflected a strong belief in the likelihood of rapid and radical social change taking place in the near future in Finland, despite the setback experienced in 1918. Kullervo Manner's speeches on the issue similarly predicted the imminence of a general day of reckoning, taking the form of an irresistible tide of European-wide revolution.[32]

Within Finland itself, the Social Democrats tended to consider the events of 1918 against the background of a much less

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31. See Rafael Colliander's letter of 4.1.1927 to Wrede (Wrede collection); Wrede 1926, pp. 41—5.
32. Paasivirta 1957, pp. 311—5; *Folkets Dagblad Politiken* 16.11.1918.

optimistic view of future developments and to view the role and actions of the labour movement prior to and during Civil War in a generally more critical light. While social and economic developments prior to 1918 were largely blamed for having virtually forced some form of uprising on the country, the previous leadership of the party also came in for sharp criticism for having allowed the situation to develop as it did. Some care was taken nevertheless, for political and ideological reasons, to avoid laying the blame for what had happened at the door of the masses themselves.[33] This style of self-critical analysis reached perhaps its most extreme form in the view put forward by Väinö Tanner that the rebellion had been little less than the labour movement's greatest single misjudgement.[34] The overall negative tone reflected in Tanner's and others' assessments came to dominate the party's official interpretation of the events of 1918, and proved instrumental in the party leadership's decision to openly reject the path of violent revolution as the way forward for the labour movement, in favour of parliamentary politics. This conscious realignment of the party and the movement behind working within, rather than outside the political system as it existed in post-1918 Finland, and which included sharp condemnation of the revolutionary tenets of Bolshevism and the more radical Left, was essentially aimed at securing adequate political breathing-space for the party to regroup and regain a degree of effective political influence.[35]

By the autumn of 1919, however, a new radical wing had begun to emerge within the slowly reactivating labour movement disassociating itself from the more moderate line adopted by the majority, and whose supporters, in describing themselves as left-wing socialists, claimed that they, rather than the official party, were the true inheritors of the radical traditions of the pre-1918 movement. Emphasising their loyalty to all those who had fought on the Red side during the Civil War, these radical socialists called for the Left to continue to adhere to the doctrine of absolute and uncompromising class struggle, and refused to recognise the legitimacy of the White victory, the new republican form of

33. H. Ryömä 1918, pp. 42—6, 58—63; E. Huttunen 1918, pp. 96—102.
34. Tanner 1956, pp. 14, 72—3.
35. H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 338—43.

government, or the choice of a leading non-socialist politician as the country's first president. The new party leaders were labelled as 'turncoats' and described as having betrayed the real labour movement and the working class it represented.[36]

With the movement heading towards a state of open internal conflict following the emergence of this breakaway radical faction, the party's moderate leadership decided to call a party conference in December 1919, in an effort to clear the air and neutralise the threat to its position. The conference was the scene of a heated and bitter struggle over the movement's future policies and ideology. The radicals, who were able to call on about a third of the representatives present for support, strongly attacked the Tanner-led party leadership, condemning its policy of working through the existing parliamentary system as having outlived its usefulness and as having proved ultimately ineffectual in advancing working class interests. The speeches of the group's leading figures, Eino Pekkala and Sulo Wuolijoki, reflected a firm belief, similar to that evident among those associated with the new Communist Party which had been formed across the border in the Soviet Union, in the inevitability of European-wide revolution.[37]

Rather than working against the labour movement's interests, the Tanner-led moderates argued, however, that the parliamentary system offered every hope of achieving better political and social conditions for the working population and of strengthening the influence and power of the labour movement. In stressing the continuity of their policies with those of Western socialist parties, Tanner and his fellow moderates hoped to make a clean break with any hint of association with Bolshevism and to underline their view that social conditions in Finland, differing as they did from those in Russia, necessarily required a different approach from that which had been adopted by the Bolsheviks, a view which drew its inspiration from a nationalist rather than an internationalist interpretation of socialist philosophy.[38]

The argument put forward by the leadership and its supporters of the need to work within the terms of the country's parliamentary

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36. SS 19.10.1919; *Suomen Työmies* 16.10., 23.10., 3.12.1920.
37. SDP:n puoluekokous 1919, ptk., pp. 20, 127—87.
38. Ibid., pp. 3—6; SS 12.9.1918; *Demokraatti* 20.12.1919.

system, and for political legitimacy to be the basis of future labour movement policy, was finally approved by the conference by a two-thirds majority. Some concession to the radicals was nevertheless made in restating the party's continued commitment to the importance of the class struggle, together with the reserved attitude taken on the question of possible participation in future coalition governments. This was also reflected in the slightly more uncompromising ideological stance adopted as a whole, compared to that which had been seen a year earlier at the special party conference held in the immediate wake of the Red defeat.[39] Despite its nine days of debate, however, the conference made little direct reference to wider ideological questions, or the party's long-term future social aims. Participants mainly concentrated on more immediate issues. The 1919 conference, with its victory for the forces of moderate, Tanner-inspired social democracy, came to be decisive in shaping the future direction of the labour movement in Finland for a number of years to come.

Aware that it had lost the battle for the soul of the Social Democratic Party, the radical wing of the labour movement found itself at a political crossroads. While the potential of the exiled Communist Party across the border in Russia, acting through its underground representatives, was recognised by radical leaders, few felt sure enough of the party's strength, operating as it did isolated from day to day developments in Finland, to consider basing their future political effort on it alone. The labour movement's relatively weak position, together with the radicals' own hostility towards what were seen as the dubious intentions of the Tanner-led moderates, led instead to the setting-up at the beginning of 1920 of an independent radical coordinating committee and to plans being put in hand to found a new broadly-based, mass party committed to campaigning on behalf of revolutionary socialist policies.[40]

A significant part was played in these developments by O. W. Kuusinen, in Finland in secret at the time laying the groundwork for the preparations for what the emigré Communist leadership

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39. SDP:n puoluekokous 1919, ptk., pp. 188—9, 213—7; H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 366, 371; Tuomioja II 1982, p. 45.
40. Hodgson 1967, p. 98; Upton 1970, p. 36.

hoped would be a successful future revolution. Kuusinen's first-hand experience of the state of the Finnish Left and Finnish society as a whole, however, seems to have led him to the conclusion that, operating as it was forced to do underground, the emigré party was in no real position to lead the working class in a future revolution, and that the best route for radical activity lay in the creation of an official mass party committed to radical goals within Finland itself. Working together with radical activists within Finland, Kuusinen gave his support to the setting-up of such a party and assisted in drawing up its political programme.[41] This meant in practice abandoning, at least temporarily, the policies and approach adopted at the founding conference of Comintern in March 1919, which had been based on the assumption of a rapid and worldwide wave of revolution taking its lead from the Bolshevik example.

The Finnish Socialist Labour Party was founded in Helsinki in the early summer of 1920. Although committed in the long term to radical social revolution, its initial programme carefully avoided aligning the new party behind the course of violent revolution, emphasising instead, in contrast to the official Communist Party programme issued in the autumn of 1918, its intention of carrying through its political struggle within the framework of bourgeois democracy, alongside the wider trade union movement. The days of the capitalist system were nevertheless seen as clearly numbered, its place to be taken by a society based on workers' soviets and an 'international federation of soviet republics'.[42] The relatively restricted conditions imposed on the party by the authorities, suspicious of its obvious ideological ties across the border and which were seen as a potential, if not actual threat to the security of the new Finnish state, were highlighted in the police's intervention during the debate at the founding conference in May on the question of affiliating the new party to Comintern, effectively breaking up the meeting. A follow-up conference was held in Helsinki in June to finally set the seal on the founding of the party, but this time the possibility of joining Comintern was not broached.[43]

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41. *Sosialistinen Aikakauslehti* 1.10., 1.12.1919.
42. Borg 1965, pp. 156—7; *Suomen Työmies* 11.12.1920.
43. Upton 1970, p. 38; Hakalehto 1966, pp. 160—1.

The split within the labour movement was thus absolute. Despite the greater power enjoyed by the moderates, the radical wing of the movement nevertheless proved surprisingly able to hold its own, as indicated by the support it received from the newly reconstituted Central Trade Union Confederation (SAJ) at the latter's conference in June 1920 and from the Workers' Athletic Union (TUL), which had been founded at the beginning of 1919 and was generally sympathetic to radical policies.[44]

The underground Communist Party, enjoying a role which a number of other parties and the Right in particular were prone to claim was significant, remained for long in the state of virtual permanent flux which had affected it since its foundation. Grouped around the opposing figures of Kuusinen and Manner, debate constantly flared over the likely pattern of reaction to the spread of the communist ideal, with those sympathetic to Manner dominating party policy-making and tenaciously clinging to the idea of a rapid spread of revolution outside Russia, including Finland. This belief was only really shaken by the second Comintern congress held in August 1920, which had to admit that international events pointed to a much slower spread of world-wide revolution than had been initially envisaged. The increasing tensions between the different factions within the party, and which reached something of a violent peak with the murder of various party members in Petrograd at the end of August 1920, appeared only to deepen as the hope of a rapid revolution to redress the Left's defeat in the Civil War began to fade. The Tartu peace negotiations for their part pointed the way towards a consolidation of official relations between bourgeois-controlled Finland and Soviet Russia.[45] Some progress towards resolving these conflicts was made at the party conference held in Petrograd in 1921, which also decided to sanction the setting-up of a secret coordinating body within Finland itself in Helsinki to help improve the effectiveness of the party's underground activities which, it had begun to be more widely recognised, could no longer be effectively directed from across the border. The latter body,

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44. SAJ:n ed. kokous 1920, ptk., pp. 149—58, 173; Ala-Kapee et al 1982, pp. 518—20.
45. Hakalehto 1966, pp. 44—6; SKP:n päätöksiä II, pp. 61—6.

although subordinated to the party central committee in Petrograd, was entrusted with a relative degree of independence in coordinating the setting-up of party cells.[46]

The parliamentary elections of 1922 marked an important stage in the struggle between the various wings of the labour movement. Despite the radicals' success in gaining ground within the unions and at the political grass roots, the moderate Social Democrats were able to out-manoeuvre them on the national political scene, winning almost twice as many parliamentary seats and beating the radicals into second place by a majority of 53 to 27. The stabilisation of the international situation also undoubtedly played a part in favouring the moderate politicians.[47] The moderates' hand was also helped by the government's decision to move against the Socialist Labour Party in August 1923, imprisoning a large number of its leading figures, including the entire parliamentary group, members of the party's various organising committees and journalists of papers associated with the radicals, in an effort to prove once and for all that the organisation was little more than a cover organisation for the emigré Communist Party. This the move failed to do, however, but together with the court cases that followed it did succeed in dealing the party's activities a powerful blow.[48] The government's determination to act against the party also prompted a shift in the policies of the Central Trade Union Confederation towards a more moderate line, thereby further undermining the basis for radical political activity.

The elections of 1924 saw the position of the Social Democrats as the largest socialist party only strengthened. This growth in political influence also served to increase discussion on party policy towards participation in possible future governments and on the options open to the labour movement to break out of the virtual parliamentary political limbo it found itself in and reassert its political muscle. The example of the Scandinavian and British labour movements assumed an important place in Finnish socialist thinking, alongside that of the German movement which had traditionally played an important part, as a source of political and

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46. Hakalehto 1966, p. 25; Hyvönen 1968, pp. 166—91.
47. H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 395—7.
48. Mäkelä 1980, p. 146; Tanner 1966, pp. 22—6; Hakalehto 1966, pp. 187—8; Hyvönen 1968, p. 296; Upton 1970, p. 73.

ideological inspiration at a time when social democratic or labour governments, although admittedly minority administrations, were in power in Sweden, Denmark and Britain. When discussion within the Finnish party began to get under way in earnest on the question of possible participation in a future coalition government, virtually the whole of the party leadership from Tanner downwards came out in favour of the idea, with even Wiik, otherwise known for his uncompromising attitudes, tacitly supporting the plan.[49] As memories of the Civil War and the confrontationist politics which it had spawned faded, attitudes on the Left towards political compromise and cooperation with the non-socialist parties began to appreciably soften.

The formation of a minority socialist government under the prime-ministership of Väinö Tanner in December 1926 confirmed the party leadership's decision to test out the possibilities of achieving social and economic reform through the government process, and at the same time provided the party with an opportunity to show its opponents that it was capable of assuming governmental responsibility. The radical socialists roundly condemned the Social Democrats' decision, describing it as reflecting the bourgeois nature of moderate social democracy. The National Coalition Party, although arguing from fundamentally different grounds, was equally condemning of the move, seeing it as a challenge to the continuity of society.

The tensions within the labour movement and over its attitude towards cooperating with the movement's non-socialist opponents were also closely reflected in the troubled pattern of labour relations typical of the 1920s, and which proved a particular source of confrontation between Left and Right. Little quarter was given on either side. Employers made little effort to change their established patriarchal and heavy-handed approach, while the radical left-dominated trade union movement barely concealed its commitment to exploiting strike action as a means of increasing the influence and bargaining power of the workforce and advancing the radical Left's political goals aimed at the eventual

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49. H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 446—7; Tuomioja II 1982, pp. 85—6; SS 5.10., 21.12.1925, 28.9., 8.10.1926.

overthrow of bourgeois society. The various governments of the period aligned themselves fairly and squarely behind the employers, resorting to a number of means, including the police, to check the activities of the unions, both at leadership level and among rank and file members, and to try and uncover the political machinations sensed behind much of the strike action that took place. This attitude was reflected in the banning early on in the decade in 1922 of a union mainly made up of dock workers and forest industry workers for its alleged connections with illegal activities.[50]

During the latter half of the 1920s, encouraged by the favourable development of the economy and the world market, the trade unions began an extensive campaign of strike action, beginning in heavy industry in 1927. The employers replied with widespread lock-outs, leading to the calling of a national dock strike in June 1928. The latter, which had a number of international repercussions and which at its peak involved a total of some 12,000 men, started as a result of the employers' partial rejection of a set of joint proposals put forward by the seamens' and dockworkers' unions for new working agreements, improved conditions and increased pay, in agreeing only to raise seamens' wages but not that of dockworkers. The Transport Workers' Union organising the dispute received significant strike assistance from abroad, both from East and West, mainly, however, from Western sources, particularly the Scandinavian countries, in contrast to the earlier series of strikes in heavy industry, where assistance had been most forthcoming from the East. In a bid to neutralise the strike's effect, employers made wide use of an independent strike-breaking organisation, Vientirauha, which had been set up in 1920 to provide a source of alternative labour to employers embroiled in difficult labour disputes, replacing striking dockworkers with large numbers of unskilled workers brought in from rural areas. This pool of non-unionised labour, lacking the appropriate skills and entailing substantial recruitment and transport costs, proved an expensive solution, however, for the employers, raising labour costs some 150%.[51] Following the series of disruptive strikes

50. Siipi 1967, pp. 46—8; Mansner 1981, pp. 244—5, 253—6.
51. Lastauttajain Liiton hallituksen ptk., 26.6., 27.8.1928 and Vuosikertomus 1928 (LL archive). The dock strike was the subject of a number of reports by

which had affected heavy industry the previous year, the employers were nevertheless determined to deal organised labour a blow which would destroy its strength and future potential to mount similar wide-scale strike action. With their massive injection of specially-recruited scab labour, the employers were in fact successfully able to keep the harbours open.

Throughout the course of the strike, the employers were able to count on the virtually united support of the non-socialist press, which consistently condemned the strike and its instigators as posing a threat to social stability and as being, for the major part, politically-inspired. The Transport Workers' Union was alleged, despite its demands for improved working conditions and a curtailment of the use of casual labour, to be motivated by revolutionary ideals, and committed to supporting Soviet timber exports to Western markets at the expense of Finnish exports.[52] The strike, which lasted for over ten months, only finally came to an end in April 1929 following a substantial wage offer from the employers, raising wage levels for a number of workers quite appreciably compared to pre-strike levels. Weakened by the length of the dispute, the Transport Workers' Union was, however, unable to secure any real progress on improved conditions or contractual agreements. The strike left a deep imprint on labour relations and created a groundswell of bitterness amongst the labour force, which found a partial outlet in the violent clashes which took place between the established workforce and those strike-breakers kept on by employers after the dispute was over.

3. Domestic attitudes to Finland's links abroad

A general re-evaluation of attitudes to the outside world took place throughout Finnish society in the period immediately following the country's gaining of independence. The latter had brought an

diplomats stationed in Helsinki; see for ex. those sent by the French Legation to Paris dated 9.6., 30.6., 10.7.1928 (AAEF Europe 1918—40/Finlande).

52. For the general background to the dock strike, see Mansner 1981, pp. 389, 395; Ala-Kapee et al 1982, pp. 723—9; Koivisto 1956, pp. 31—8. See also International Transport Federation 1928—29. Amsterdam 1930, pp. 73—5; *Suomen Työmies* 7.3.1930.

opening-up of Finland's links with Europe and beyond on a hitherto unknown scale, but had also seen the severance of a number of established traditional ties and those with Russia in particular, and the souring of Finnish-Swedish relations as a result of the Åland Islands dispute. For many, international problems came to be seen, perhaps naively, in terms of their relation to concepts of absolute justice and absolute political and moral values rather than their more immediate contexts. Foreign and domestic policy issues were often allowed to shade into one another, with little attempt being made to distinguish between the two, and attitudes towards a number of international questions, particularly in the case of conservative opinion, became powerfully coloured by the domestic experiences of the Civil War of 1918 and its aftermath.

The strongly assertive, nationalist style of thinking which increasingly came to dominate the more influential sections of non-socialist opinion drew much of its strength from the growing and deepening sense of national confidence which developed in the wake of independence and from the widely-felt need to emphasise the value of everything perceived as quintessentially Finnish. The major weakness of this nationalist approach lay in its narrow self-complacency, which tended to identify things Finnish with solid and dependable traditional values, and by extension with conservative attitudes. At the same time, it encouraged a wary, almost hostile attitude to the outside world and all things foreign. Instead of being seen as capable of providing useful sources of new ideas, everything international and cosmopolitan tended to be seen as posing actual or potential threats to the basis of national identity.

Post-independence nationalist thinking drew much of its inspiration from the ideas associated with Finland's Finno-Ugrian ethnic and linguistic background, together with the expansionist-minded nationalist sentiment which they had spawned. The latter had, in various forms, played a part in Finnish cultural life for much of the latter half of the nineteenth century, but only assumed the aspect of a more concrete political goal, involving the annexation of Finnic-related peoples to Finland to form a united ethnic entity, following independence. The sudden upswing in expansionist sentiment typical of the immediate post-independence years also owed its origin, in part at least, to the post-war

international balance of power and to the dominance of anti-Bolshevik sentiment, which led to Russia being seen not only as politically weak but also as potentially likely to succumb to a gradual process of disintegration. Expansionist hopes in the East, which were defended by appeals to the rights of minority nationalities to national self-determination, were mainly, although not exclusively, focused on East Karelia. Contacts were also established by activists with the Ingrian population living in the area around Petrograd and with the Finnish-speaking population living along the Gulf of Bothnia in northern Sweden.

A number of new organisations were set up in the early 1920s to advance the expansionist cause, including the Karelian Citizens' Federation (Karjalan Kansalaisliitto), the Ingrian Federation (Inkerin Liitto) and the Academic National Club (Akateeminen Heimoklubi).[53] Many of these offered organisatorial and other assistance to the various Finnish expeditionary forces and volunteer groups which took part in military action across the border in the early years of independence. A new stage in the growth and consolidation of expansionist-minded opinion was marked by the founding of the Academic Karelian Society (Akateeminen Karjala Seura, AKS) in the autumn of 1922. Initially founded in the aftermath of the failure of Finnish attempts at intervention across the border in Karelia to assist those refugees who had moved to Finland, the AKS soon grew into a wider, more general forum for students and the young educated classes interested in the themes revolving around the Greater Finland idea.

Changes in the political climate in mid-decade, however, caused a shift within the organisation and within the activities of the Finnish-speaking student body in general away from issues across the border to ones closer to home, most particularly to the campaign for strengthening the position of the Finnish language and Finnish-language culture against what was seen as the continuing over-dominance of the country's Swedish cultural inheritance. This shift was, in part, a reaction to the significant growth which had taken place in the numbers of Finnish-speaking students entering higher education and Helsinki University, in

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53. Nygård 1978, pp. 65, 109, 123.

particular, where Swedish-speaking traditions were especially strong. There was a natural sympathy among this new generation of students, particularly those coming from rural homes, towards the nationalist ideals advanced by the AKS and its commitment to challenging the position of the remaining strongholds of Swedish-speaking influence and power.[54]

For those on the Right, Soviet Russia appeared as the dominant problem affecting the security of the new Finnish state. While estimates of its military potential varied widely and the durability of its social system was continually held up to question, its potential as a powerful and aggressive ideological threat was never doubted. Opinions within the National Coalition Party, the main bastion of conservative opinion, towards the Russian question, however, were far from united. This was in large part due to the different and in some respects conflicting political traditions which had found a home in the party. Old Finns, such as Lauri Ingman and Ernst Nevanlinna, tended to favour a cautious approach, making due allowance for the fact of the Soviet Union's great power status. Those party members who had been associated with the activist movement, in contrast, tended to favour a more direct avowal of the gulf which they saw separating Finland from the Soviet Union, and a more active policy of sounding out possible allies to strengthen the country's hand in the event of any future crisis in Finnish-Soviet relations.[55]

The Right, particularly as a result of the bonds forged during the latter stages of the Civil War, had developed strong sympathies with Germany and shared German dissatisfaction with the terms imposed on Germany by the Allies at Versailles and a number of the other post-war changes in Central Europe. Many of the developments which had taken place in post-war Germany, however, including the rise of the Centre and the Social Democrats to positions of dominance and governmental power, had inevitably proved less attractive to Finnish conservatives, pointing as they did to the weakening hold of conservative ideas over the German political scene. They nevertheless failed to eliminate the

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54. Klinge IV 1968, pp. 16—19, 79—84; Saukkonen 1973, pp. 54—6; Alapuro 1973, pp. 115, 123; Rasila—Jutikkala—Kulha 1976, pp. 136—7; Kirby 1979, p. 66.
55. Rommi 1974, pp. 14—20; Ylä-Närvä 1983, pp. 142—6.

overall goodwill felt towards Germany and German interests.[56] The debt of gratitude felt among right-wing circles in Finland towards Germany, or rather the old pre-republican Germany, for her assistance rendered during the Civil War was also linked to the historical role which Germany had traditionally enjoyed in Finland from the 1800s onwards as a major source of social, economic and political ideas.

In line with the Right's overall attitudes on European security issues and the balance of power in Europe, distinct reservations were felt towards the League of Nations, which tended to be seen very much as a tool created to advance the policies and aims of the Allies. The Western powers, with their different ideological and political traditions and commitment to parliamentary democracy, were in fact looked on with some suspicion on the Right. The same coolness was also evident in conservative attitudes towards Sweden and the rest of Scandinavia. The conflict over the Åland Islands and what was seen as Sweden's thinly-veiled attempt to woo the Islands away from Finland in the spring of 1918 had created a sense of hostility extending down to the grass roots of right-wing opinion. This reserved attitude towards Sweden on the Right was only reinforced by the shift which took place within Sweden towards the Left and social democracy.[57]

Attitudes among Progressive Party politicians to developments in Europe, although not completely homogeneous, were markedly different from those of their more right-wing colleagues. A number of leading liberal figures were keen to underline the European and Western nature of Finland and Finnish society. The liberal view of the League of Nations and the value of the international system of justice it represented was generally positive, even though the League failed to be given as much prominence in Finnish liberal pronouncements, as a result of Finland's political and geographical position, as was typical among liberal opinion in many Western countries. For the liberals, as for much of non-socialist

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56. US 25.2.1919, 29.12.1922; *Iltalehti* 2.1.1923; *Karjala* 16.11., 21.11.1918. See Rantakari's letter of 31.1.1920 to Danielson-Kalmari (Danielson-Kalmari collection 5), Harri Holma's letter of 20.12.1920 to Eino Suolahti (Eino Suolahti collection), and Ossian Donner's of 19.9.1923 to Kai Donner (Kai Donner collection).
57. US 14.6.1924; *Iltalehti* 8.9.1925; *Ylioppilaslehti* 7.2.1925.

opinion, it was Russia which continued to be seen as the major problem area facing Finnish security. Views on ways of countering the Russian problem varied. A number of liberals argued the case for pursuing a foreign policy directed towards looking for allies and partners among the other border states along Russia's western frontier, while others, comprised mainly of those who had previously been sympathetic with the Entente cause, stressed the value of links with Britain and the importance of keeping Finnish foreign policy in line with that followed by Britain. The latter continued to occupy a particularly favoured place in the liberal view of the world as the traditional stronghold of parliamentary values.[58]

In the case of the essentially inward-looking Agrarian Party, with its emphasis on national rural values and relatively narrow political outlook, international questions remained largely little discussed in any real sense. Attitudes towards Russia were significantly coloured by memories of imperial policies during the latter years of the Tsarist régime and by a strong ideological antipathy to communist philosophy. With its stress on things Finnish, the party was also highly critical and suspicious of the continued power and influence of the Swedish-speaking minority within Finland, and of the intentions of Sweden itself. This negative reaction, both to the Swedish-speaking minority and to Sweden, reflected the traditional social hostility of the rural lower classes, especially those living far away from the political centre, towards the Swedish-speaking upper class. The more general animosity felt towards Sweden was reinforced for Agrarian supporters, as it was for those of a number of other parties, by the anger at what were seen as Sweden's continued attempts to claim the Åland Islands for herself and encourage local separatist sentiments in the area.[59]

A distinct widening of interest in international issues in the Agrarian Party press, however, was caused by Finland's new export effort directed towards Western markets. Britain, in particular, received favourable coverage in these reports, being seen as a country which had achieved an enviable record of steady

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58. Kunttu 1980, pp. 82—4.
59. Mylly 1978, pp. 79, 128—9.

progress and development, and as an international power with a positive and flexible style of foreign policy.[60] This increased interest in what was going on outside Finland's borders also extended to the new independent states of the eastern half of Europe, in all of which peasant or rural-orientated parties, very much in the Agrarian Party's own mould, had managed to carve out important political positions for themselves since 1919, and where land reform, as in Finland, had been one of the major issues. Indicative of this interest and the sympathy felt with developments in the region was the party's decision to join the coordinating body set up in Prague in the 1920s, sometimes referred to as the 'green international', uniting Eastern European agrarian parties in a loose form of cooperation and debate.[61]

Finland's links with Sweden played a special role in the thinking of the country's Swedish-speaking politicians and the Swedish-speaking minority as a whole. Much hope was attached to the possibility of independence allowing closer contact between the two countries, following the elimination of the need to take Russian concerns into account. The attraction of closer links with Sweden and the rest of Scandinavia was further pressed home for the Swedish-speaking community as it became increasingly aware of its minority position in Finnish society and fearful that it would be subject to growing cultural isolation and assimilation. The tense atmosphere existing between Sweden and Finland, largely caused by the disagreements over the fate of the Åland Islands, however, weakened and in some cases temporarily broke the Swedish-speaking population's ties westwards. The decision of the Swedish-speaking political establishment to align itself with the Finnish majority in arguing for the continuance of Finnish sovereignty over the Islands proved the source of some annoyance in Sweden. While the peak of this tension soon burned itself out, it inevitably left some rancour on both sides.

The major concern of Swedish-speaking political and cultural figures in maintaining and developing political links with Sweden revolved, for the major part, around the community's anxieties about the language question within Finland and the community's

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60. Ibid., p. 241.
61. Mylly 1979, pp. 19—20.

overall future in Finnish society, and its attempts to keep Swedish opinion abreast of these issues and sympathetic to its interests. Attention was focused on two major targets in Sweden, the academic community and the press. The former, it was hoped, would be able to act as a respectable form of pressure-group, highlighting linguistic developments in Finland and drawing public attention to the threat to the position of Swedish-speakers. A similar, but decidedly more partisan role was envisaged for the Swedish press. Among those prominent in the early 1920s in developing these links with Sweden were the academic Gunnar Landtman and the secretary of the Swedish People's Party, Rafael Colliander. The fact of a shared language also helped the growth of contacts between the two communities at the more informal level.[62]

The Social Democrats had been prominent in welcoming the fall of the old European monarchies and the growth in the influence and authority of the international labour movement in the wake of the widespread acceptance of parliamentary democracy. Developments in Finland, on the other hand, in comparison with the generally positive trend in the rest of Europe, had been seen by the party as giving much less cause for optimism. The Social Democrats were also among those most critical of the harsh terms imposed by the Versailles peace and many of the other treaties negotiated at the end of the First World War, which they saw as reflecting a significant measure of Western imperialist self-interest and a desire on the part of the West to hamper the recovery and future well-being of the defeated countries of Europe and restrict the potential of their new political leaderships.[63]

In terms of its relations with the wider socialist world in the period following the end of the war in Europe, Finnish social democracy continued to draw the bulk of its inspiration from the German labour movement. The sharp struggle within the German movement over the direction of future policy, together with events such as the spartacist uprising in Berlin in January 1919, however, caused a certain amount of re-evaluation of the Finnish movement's international links and of ideas within the party itself. While the more moderate elements within the party expressed

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62. *Nya Argus* 1.7.1920; StT 9.11.1920.
63. SS 10.12.1918, 17.5., 30.6.1919, 4.1.1923.

their doubts about what would have happened to the newly-formed German parliamentary republic if the uprising had been successful, the more radical elements within the Left concentrated on the human losses of the uprising, including the deaths of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht.[64]

Nearer home, the Finnish party had established contacts with its fellow socialist parties in the three Baltic republics in 1919. Joint discussions between the four parties on the common political problems facing the newly independent states in the region, and attended by leading figures of the Finnish party leadership, were held in Riga for three consecutive years following this initiative. The Finnish party soon found itself restricted, however, by the limitations of being tied to a purely Baltic axis and increasingly keen to gain access to a wider perspective on socialist issues than could be provided by the small Baltic parties. This led to a decision, made plain at the Riga conference in 1921 by Tanner, to pursue links with Sweden and the other Scandinavian countries.[65] Sweden, in particular, served as a powerful example to Finnish socialist leaders of the potential of the labour movement to achieve a significant position of influence and power in a small state broadly comparable with Finland, and as proof of social democratic politicians' ability to handle governmental responsibility. As the after-effects of the Civil War began to diminish and its immediate memory fade, the Finnish party leadership began to take an increased interest in the Swedish experiment and the possibilities of the Finnish party itself assuming a role in government. The leadership went to some pains to assert its moderate ideas and its commitment to working through parliamentary democracy along the lines of the Swedish example.[66]

The Social Democrats' attitude towards the Bolshevik-led Soviet Union, in contrast, remained ambiguous. While the importance of developing peaceful bilateral relations was stressed, especially after the signing of the Tartu peace, the party not only criticised the violent means favoured by the Bolsheviks, but also, on a more

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64. SS 30.1., 10.3., 12.3., 23.10.1919; *Suomen Työmies* 9.11.1920; *Työn Oikeus* 30.10.1919.
65. Bruno Kalnins 29.3.1973.
66. SS 11.6., 13.6., 30.9., 21.10., 29.12.1924.

fundamental level, even went so far as to question whether Russia, as an economically and socially backward country, was really ideally suited to the kind of large-scale social experiment which the revolution had initiated. The more industrialised Western European countries were, it was argued by the party's new ideologists, marshalling Marx' own theories in defence of their view, ultimately more suited to taking the major role in realising the more ambitious aims of the labour movement, an argument which only gained added weight following the introduction of the NEP in the Soviet Union.[67] There were a number of those in the social democratic leadership at the beginning of the 1920s who feared that communism in Russia would eventually collapse. Others preferred to assume that the post-revolutionary political system in Russia would eventually shift towards a more western-style of government, giving other non-Bolshevik political groups, and especially the other socialist parties, more of a concrete say in developments. The internal wrangling within the Soviet Communist Party after the death of Lenin in 1924 only seemed to strengthen the general argument behind these views, held by Sventorzetski and others, that the Soviet Union continued to be a country far from fully recovered from either the effects of the First World War or the Russian Civil War.[68]

In strong contrast to the Western leanings of the Social Democrats, the political ideas of the breakaway radical socialists were decidedly more pro-Soviet and favourable towards the Bolsheviks. Hopes for the future, both with regard to Finland and to the development of socialism internationally, were focused on the prospective success of the Soviet experiment of socialist construction and with it the spread of communism elsewhere. Their ideological concerns were unashamedly internationalist. The Karelian Workers' Commune founded in Karelia was especially close to the radicals' hearts as an example of the new social system in action, while the leading role played by Finnish emigré socialists, Edvard Gylling, who had fled across the border at the end of the Civil War, among the most prominent of them, in its genesis added to its emotional appeal.[69] It seems clear that

67. SS 7.11.1922; *Sosialisti* 7.11.1922; *Kansan Työ* 4.8., 9.11.1922, 14.7.1924.
68. SDP:n puoluekokous 1926, Alustukset pp. 34—5.
69. See for ex. *Suomen Työmies* 7.11.1922.

something along parallel lines was eventually hoped for for Finland in radical socialist circles. Particularly indicative of the radicals' faith in the Bolshevik cause is the fact that while the infighting that followed Lenin's death in the Soviet Union was given prominent coverage in both the non-socialist and social democratic press, *Tiedonantaja*, together with the other radical papers, refrained from analysing the issue until the struggle for power had been resolved and Stalin finally taken over leadership of the party. Thereafter, the radical press consistently supported the victorious section of the party, dealing out criticism to the defeated, including Trotsky.[70]

A similar difference in approaches between Right and Left to matters of international relations was also evident in the widely diverging attitudes taken by employers' organisations and the trade union movement towards the moves made during the 1920s on the international arena to expand the embrace of international cooperation on labour issues.

Finnish employers, in the shape of the Central Federation of Employers (STK), proved consistently uninterested in the possibility of international collaboration in the handling of labour market questions. The Finnish federation's membership of the international employers' organisation based in Brussels was, to all intents and purposes, largely nominal, and its participation in the congresses and work of the International Labour Organisation was of a similarly low order. Employers preferred to maintain their traditional independence of action, proving reluctant to let themselves get embroiled in any international commitments likely to tie them to participation in or implementation of industrial relations reform and internationally-agreed developments on such things as working conditions and terms of employment, beyond those strictly necessary for the efficient handling of foreign trade.[71] Although generally hostile to the overall principle of international cooperation on industrial relations questions, Finnish employers' organisations did maintain some links with similar organisations in Sweden. Contacts between the two countries were in fact

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70. Salin 1977, pp. 17—24.
71. Mansner 1981, pp. 442—5.

relatively good, allowing a constant exchange of information back and forth on current events in the labour field and wider social and economic developments. Despite the relative closeness of these ties, however, labour market politics in both countries remained far apart from each other, particularly over the question of formal terms of employment, a matter which was viewed more favourably by the Swedish federation than by its Finnish counterpart.[72]

In contrast to the low international profile favoured by employers during the 1920s, the Finnish trade union movement took a much more positive approach to the question of international cooperation, although this, as in the case of a number of other issues, was often overshadowed and complicated by the split in the movement between its Social Democrat-controlled and Communist-controlled wings. The ideological gap between these two groupings was especially highlighted in the debate which developed over the question of the Central Trade Union Confederation (SAJ) joining either the communist trade union international Profintern, based in Moscow, or the more social democrat-inspired equivalent organisation based in Amsterdam. The radical leadership of the SAJ organised a ballot of the federation's members on the question of joining Profintern in 1922, which resulted in a majority in favour of joining. The fact, however, that the great majority of members, some 70%, did not even bother to vote, indicating the low level of interest on international matters in general among the rank and file members of the movement, made the leadership hold back on making any decision to apply for immediate membership of Profintern.[73] At the back of the radical leadership's mind was also the fear that, with the SAJ's membership politically split, any move towards joining the Moscow-backed organisation might well result in the withdrawal of the Social Democrats altogether, further adding to the decline in membership figures which had taken place during the whole of the early 1920s, from a peak of some 100,000 to only some 60,000 members. This fear was also compounded by the misgivings felt about how the authorities might react to any move further

72. See for ex. the SAF memorandum of 19.6.1928 to the STK (SAF archive).
73. *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz* 6.12.1921; Ala-Kapee et al 1982, pp. 546—64.

underlining the federation's ties with Moscow. The memory of the response to the founding of the Socialist Labour Party in the spring of 1920 was still fresh in people's minds.[74]

In line with the overall political stance of its radical leadership, the SAJ refused to recognise the legitimacy of either the League of Nations, which was condemned as a tool designed to advance the interests of the capitalist great powers, or that of the Western-based ILO, to whose conferences it refused to send any official delegates. Maintaining a Finnish trade union presence at ILO meetings was left to Social Democratic union leaders. It was only towards the middle of the decade that the SAJ's uncompromising attitude softened somewhat, as a result of the generally weaker position enjoyed by organised labour.[75] The decision by the SAJ to sign the Copenhagen agreement between Soviet, Finnish and Norwegian trade union delegates in 1928 nevertheless indicated the leadership's persistent loyalty to its radical ideals. This agreement was largely a Soviet-inspired attempt to establish closer cooperation between the three trade union movements and, in the longer term, to pave the wave for a possible unification on Soviet terms of Profintern and the Amsterdam-based social democrat-backed organisation. This move, linking the two most radical Scandinavian trade union federations, naturally excluded the Swedish federation (LO), which was securely in social democrat hands. The social democratic minority wing within the SAJ, which maintained its own independent links with the Swedish LO, however, came out in opposition to the Copenhagen agreement, which finally remained unratified by the SAJ at its conference in May 1929.[76]

74. Kertomus SAJ:n toiminnasta v. 1922, pp. 35—6; SAJ:n edustajakokous 1923, p. 82.
75. Ala-Kapee et al 1982, pp. 498—501, 675.
76. Ibid., pp. 736—42. See also K. A. Fagerholm's letters of 2.1.1927 and 29.9.1928 to A. Thorberg, the head of the Swedish LO organisation (LO archive).

4. A new army, a new foreign ministry

In addition to its many other wider social and political repercussions in post-independence Finland, the Civil War also had a decisive impact on the shaping of the country's armed forces and on attitudes throughout much of the inter-war period towards the military establishment, and on the activities, attitudes and overall thinking typical within the armed forces themselves. A particularly problematic issue was the fact that Finland's new armed forces had, out of necessity, to be organised exclusively on the basis of the hastily-assembled White army units which had been operative in the Civil War, a fact which only served to perpetuate memories of the conflict, accentuate social tension, and distort internal military development strategies.

The work of providing the armed forces with an infrastructure to replace the highly improvised command and administrative structure developed during the Civil War only really got under way at the end of 1918 following the departure, along with the remainder of von der Goltz' expeditionary force, of the German officers under Colonel von Redern who had up until then been entrusted with the task of organising the new army's structure. During his brief secondment, von Redern had had little real opportunity to get to grips with the problems inherent in the task of creating an effective national army.

Aside from these problems deriving from purely internal difficulties, those planning the shape and structure of the armed forces were also faced with the more general problems posed by the unsettled international situation and the uncertainty it bred as regards the specific tasks the armed forces would be called upon to fulfil, both in potential conflict situations and in peacetime. More specifically, effective organisation of the armed forces was held back by the lack of an existing established military base on which to build, following the disbandment of Finland's own independent military units on Russian insistence some twenty years previously in 1901. This was particularly evident in the case of the officer corps, drawn as it was from soldiers who had been trained under two very different régimes and owing allegiance to two different military traditions; the German, Prussian-dominated one in which the volunteers had been trained and the Tsarist Russian army tradition, in which a number of Finnish officers had made success-

ful careers for themselves, not least among them Mannerheim himself. The training received by the Jäger volunteers in Germany had been brief and concentrated on field command skills, while ex-Tsarist Army officers often had a much longer and richer spread of experience.[77]

Their period of service as active officers in the White army during the Civil War was for the great majority of this essentially disparate group the only real piece of experience of working together in fighting units any of them shared. Even then, the roles of the two officer groups had been clearly differentiated, with Jäger officers typically serving in front line command positions, while their Russian-trained colleagues had largely served as staff officers and in the upper echelons of the command structure. More importantly, this experience, based as it had been on an internal conflict directed against internal enemies rather than at an external threat, and fought by rapidly-organised units pursuing largely improvised tactics, bore little relation to the type of combat situations likely to be encountered by a national army.

The work of creating the new national army was further hindered by the sense of exhaustion which affected units following the Civil War and its follow-up, and which took some time to dissipate. Added to this, the army's deficiencies in its early years were only exaggerated both by the many changes taking place in the rest of society and particularly in politics, and by the innumerable internal personnel changes which took place in the upper command echelons, and the persistence of the internal differences of views and military ideas affecting the officer corps.

The organisation of the army's supreme command structure, embracing the various roles of the commander-in-chief and his personal staff, the General Staff and Defence Ministry, was initially based on plans drawn up during 1919 under the direction of Mannerheim, in his role as Regent, and implemented in September of the same year after Ståhlberg had been elected as President.[78] Their essential weakness, however, lay in the fact that they were designed on the assumption that the head of state would also be an

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77. For the general background to the problem, see Finska Kadettkåren 1812—1912 and its Supplement; Puolustusvoimiemme upseeristo (1933); Suomen Jääkärielämäkerrasto (1975).
78. Terä-Tervasmäki I 1973, pp. 83—5; Asetus 8.9.1919.

army officer. In the case of a civilian acting as commander-in-chief, the otherwise unsubordinated and overlapping tripartite command structure had little chance of working effectively and only encouraged competition between those involved over ultimate control over developments and decision-making. This was further complicated by the lack of any clear definition of the areas for which the three levels of command were responsible, and by the fact that the command structure of the paramilitary Civil Guard, which came under the direct orders of the head of state, was completely separate.

The problems contained within the tripartite command structure were well reflected in the dispute which developed over the efforts of General Bruno Jalander, who served as Minister of Defence between 1920 and 1923, to strengthen the power and position of his office in relation to the rest of the command structure. Jalander was instrumental in outlining a parliamentary bill which would have subordinated the country's entire defence forces to the Minister of Defence, acting under the President. The widespread opposition which this proposal provoked and which took as its major argument the short-sightedness of giving supreme command to the defence minister who, as a member of government, naturally changed with every change of administration, however, saw to it that it was shelved. General Enckell, for his part, who had strongly defended the role of the General Staff of which he was Chief, responded to Jalander's idea by proposing the setting-up of a defence council to serve as a coordinating body and source of specialist knowledge on military questions.[79] Some progress was made in rationalising the upper echelons of the armed forces' command structure following the abandonment in the spring of 1924 of the three-tier division of responsibility and the decision to subordinate the General Staff, which up until then had enjoyed relative independence, to the commander-in-chief, and the amalgamation a year later of the commander-in-chief's modest personal staff with the General Staff.[80]

The major defence concerns in the early years of independence

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79. See 'Luonnos (2.1923) ... sotaväen ylimmästä komentovallasta ja hallinnosta' (Ståhlberg collection 83); US 23.2.1923; Hbl 24.2.1923; Oscar Enckell: PM ylimmän johdon järjestelystä (Ståhlberg collection 83); *Iltalehti* 30.6.1924.
80. Terä-Tervasmäki I 1973, p. 102.

revolved around fortification, mobilization and training issues. The use of permanent fortifications in the East as a means of consolidating the country's defence potential was particularly favoured at a time when there was severe doubts about the new army's combat abilities, particularly in mobile operations, given the lack of sufficient well-trained officers. General Enckell, working on the basis of the strategical ideas that had been developed during the early stages of the army's existence, took charge of the outlining of the fortification plans along the Finnish-Russian border on the Karelian Isthmus. Supplementary specialist technical advice was provided by a group of French fortification officers. Enckell's final plans, diverging somewhat from the original proposals, called for creating permanent defensive lines some way inside the Finnish border to give the army adequate time in a crisis to fully mobilise.[81]

In drawing up an overall strategy for general mobilization in the early 1920s, military planners under General Enckell chose to station the majority of the army's peacetime units, which amounted to three infantry divisions and a brigade of light infantry, in the south and south-east of the country, areas which enjoyed good logistical and transport connections with the eastern border zone from which any enemy attack was assumed to be likely to originate. The mobilization process itself was planned to take place on a unit basis, with peacetime contingents reinforced with reservists serving as the operational backbone of an expanded army. Further supplementary combat units would be made up of reservists. The necessary additional arms and other equipment which would be required were to be held in store by peacetime units.[82]

Built around full-time units rather than military districts, these mobilization plans were largely similar to the arrangements which had been used by the Imperial Russian Army, in which General Enckell had gained his military experience. As Chief of the General Staff, Enckell's main strengths lay with his good understanding of overall planning needs, but against this he tended to have an uncertain grasp of detail and of the special

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81. Arimo 1981, pp. 19—22.
82. Terä-Tervasmäki I 1973, p. 92.

features of Finnish conditions. This nevertheless proved of less significance on the question of mobilization, as the initial division of command responsibilities between the army and the Defence Ministry gave the latter the task of dealing with the majority of detailed questions covering the deployment of personnel, transportation and logistics. In the case of the latter, however, neither the ministry nor the army itself seems to have had a very clear idea of the matérial at the country's disposal.[83]

The question of military training was of central importance to the future development of the army. The army's new Officer Training School, which began operations in January 1919, became the base for training new officer recruits. The courses in its first few years of activity were well populated with the sons and grandsons of previous generations of officers who had attended the Hamina Military Academy during the nineteenth century. This was accompanied by the dominance of Swedish-speaking recruits in the academy's early years and their high numbers in the academy's intake up until mid-decade.[84]

The heterogeneity of the officer corps, which showed some similarities with that found in the new Czechoslovak and Polish armies, continued to be a cause of problems for some years after independence.[85] The very diversity of training backgrounds, ranging from the Jäger volunteer battalion and the Imperial Army to the new Finnish Officer Training School and the short basic officer courses arranged in Viipuri in 1918 and at the Lappeenranta Artillery School in 1919, typical within the officer corps inevitably made the job of creating integrated and efficient command structures difficult. A number of problems were also encountered in matters of promotion, as a result of the difficulties in weighing the merits of candidates possessing such different service backgrounds and levels of experience.[86]

From the autumn of 1919 onwards, a number of Finnish officers, typically young officers of captain and lieutenant rank, together with a few Jäger-trained men, were sent to military academies in

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83. Ibid., pp. 89, 92.
84. Franck 1969, p. 19; *Kylkirauta* 1935, p. 22; Erik Ulfsson 22.11.1978.
85. Information provided by Colonel W. Kozaczuki, 5.6.1979.
86. Suomalainen upseerikoulutus 1779—1979, pp. 111—5, 120—4; Päiväkäsky 24.5.1919 (Ylipäällikön päiväkäskyt 1919/SA).

France and Italy for additional training, mainly at the suggestion of General Enckell. Taking advantage of the new freedom given by Finland's post-war policies to do this, Enckell probably hoped that it would act as a counterbalance to the otherwise strong German bias in officer training which had developed as a result of the dominance of the volunteer tradition. Older officers above the rank of major who had been trained in Germany were excluded from this programme, although a few did attend courses at the Swedish Military Academy in the mid-1920s and later.[87] Training for higher ranks was complemented by a special arrangement, sponsored from private financial sources, which allowed some 20 officers to participate in a two year staff officer training course in Germany in the early 1920s, initiated by General von der Goltz. It is perhaps typical of the period that President Ståhlberg only probably became aware of the existence of this programme some time after it had begun operation, by which time there was little to be gained from halting it, although he considered it as conflicting with Finland's official foreign policy.[88]

Officer training was finally put on an organised national footing with the founding in 1924, after much pressure from the army's German-trained officers, who otherwise feared for their future promotion prospects and military careers in the event of the country relying on training abroad, of the National Military Academy in Helsinki. This had initially been opposed by General Enckell, who had favoured the continuance of training abroad, which he thought fully capable of providing adequate, competent young officer material, before he later came to accept the idea of a temporary Finnish academy. General Nenonen, in contrast, had actively supported the founding of a Finnish academy from the outset, arguing that it would allow the development of a Finnish officer corps in line with the needs of the Finnish army and the country's military capabilities.[89] Reliance on foreign military academies had been particularly criticised among those arguing for a national academy because of their inappropriate focus, from the Finnish point of view, on providing a military education and

87. Seppälä 1974, pp. 12—13; A. E. Martola 12.4.1979.
88. Hersalo II 1966, pp. 218—25; Suomalainen upseerikoulutus 1779—1979, p. 311; Paavo Susitaival 23.2.1979.
89. Seppälä 1974A, pp. 13—14; Alajoki 1975, pp. 116, 262—66.

strategic and tactical planning skills appropriate to the military requirements of countries quite different from Finland.

The training of conscripts, as with officer training, was similarly handicapped by the lack of established and well-tried domestic military traditions. This problem was at its worst during the early 1920s when, for lack of adequate alternatives, those running courses for new infantry recruits had access to little else than the German training manuals which had been translated into Finnish for use with the volunteer battalion during the First World War. Basic training tended as a result to be approached and practiced in widely different ways in different units, a situation which often resulted in unit commanders dictating their own style of training.[90]

Formal training, marching drill and strict discipline were central features of the basic training given to conscripted recruits, who served 12 months in infantry units and 15 months in specialised branches of the army from 1922 onwards, compared to 18 months earlier. This was thought sufficient and little effort was made to provide training in field operations or combat, partially no doubt because of the lack of suitable training personnel. Former Jäger officers made up the bulk of instructors in infantry units, while ex-Russian Army officers were more prominent in field and coastal artillery units. Both groups of officers, despite their coming from very different military backgrounds, were unanimous in extolling the virtues of strict discipline and a tough military life. While a proportion of conscripts called up for service were trained as non-commissioned officers, it was only in the early 1920s that conscripts also began to be trained as reserve officers. This initially took place somewhat haphazardly and without the benefit of any overall structured planning, largely as a result of the general view then current of the low level of need for reserve officers.[91]

Overall attitudes in the rest of society towards the armed forces were sharply divided from the very first years of independence onwards. The whole concept of a national army was clouded for many by memories of the recent past and the association of the army with the White army of the Civil War. This affected both

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90. Österman 1955, pp. 38, 51.
91. Mikola 1961, pp. 34—5.

conservative opinion, which felt close ties to the army and favoured a strong defence force, and socialist opinion which, attracted to the idea of pacifism, tended to identify the new army with the force which had been instrumental in breaking Red resistance in 1918.

These problems surrounding popular attitudes towards the defence forces seem to have been little discussed or registered by the military leadership. Something of the tension which existed, however, was nevertheless obliquely recognised in the wording of the military oath, which obliged those serving to defend both their country and the legitimate social order. For many professional serving officers during the 1920s, in fact, the idea of the enemy within was a very real part of their outlook. This was particularly reflected in the introduction of special selection procedures, taking account of known or assumed political views, in the selection of potential officer and non-commissioned officer material. Part of the emphasis on strict discipline typically imposed on conscripts lay in the view current among higher ranking officers that it offered an effective way of eliminating, or at least neutralising any revolutionary opinions or other unacceptable attitudes among the lower ranks.[92]

The continued existence of the Civil Guard as a voluntary militia force long after its original role had disappeared remained something of an anomaly, although not one unparalleled elsewhere, as similar organisations also existed in Estonia and Latvia. From a purely military point of view, the Civil Guard represented a substantial and useful trained reserve force, amounting to the equivalent of some four to five annual intakes of conscripts into the regular army. At the same time, however, the Guard, by virtue of its close associations with memories of the Civil War and the White army, acted as a divisive social institution standing in the way of the development of a sense of national consensus. The Right, which saw in the Civil Guard an important guarantor of internal national security against any revolutionary forces active in society and a useful pressure group safeguarding traditional social values against the policies pursued by the Ståhlbergian centre,

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92. Hersalo II 1966, pp. 90—5. Also see Prime Minister Ingman's speech in Parliament on 4.10.1924 (VP 1924 ptk., p. 409).

proved particularly keen to preserve the organisation's relatively independent standing alongside, but separate from the regular army.

The tension existing between the Civil Guard and Ståhlberg came to a head in the dispute which developed following the publication during 1921 of a number of comments critical of official foreign policy by General Paul von Gerich, the commander of the Helsinki Civil Guard, which provoked the government, considering them inappropriate for an officer in his position, into demanding his resignation. This, together with the government's pressure on the organisation's overall commander to similarly resign, provoked a strong counter-reaction within the Civil Guard.[93]

Liberal opinion tended to consider the Civil Guard a necessary institution and a useful and low-cost way of providing the army with a trained reserve, a point particularly stressed by Agrarian politicians. Liberals were nevertheless caught in a difficult position, as while recognising that attitudes within the Guard favoured the Right and that, as an organisation, it was committed to opposing moderate republican opinion of the type pursued by Ståhlberg, their opposition to the Left made it equally difficult for them to come out too clearly in opposition to the Guard's continued existence. *Karjalan Aamulehti*, a paper close to this section of opinion, did nevertheless express some doubts about the wisdom of its continued activities.[94] Opposition to the Guard was understandably most forthright within the labour movement. Its existence only seemed to confirm and reinforce the political discrimination that the movement had felt itself to be under since the Civil War and before. Attitudes for and against the Guard also came to the fore at local government level, with non-socialist town councils, including those in Helsinki and Turku, for example, regularly granting financial assistance to the Civil Guard, and socialist-controlled Tampere and Kotka consistently refusing to countenance any such moves. The split between Left and Right in Finnish society affecting both urban and rural areas was

93. Blomstedt 1969, pp. 418—20; Meinander 1980, pp. 49—50. Also see the Swedish envoy's report to Stockholm dated 1.7.1921 (UD HP1Af).
94. *Karjalan Aamulehti* 7.9., 10.9.1919, 9.7., 12.7.1921; Huttunen VI 1968, p. 342; Mylly 1978, pp. 193—6.

particularly bitter in the hostility which characterised relations at the local level between the Civil Guard and the trade unions and the Social Democrats.[95]

Military thinking in the early 1920s was severely handicapped by the lack among both the General Staff and the Defence Ministry of any adequate overall development programme designed to coordinate planning and investment across the whole spectrum of the armed forces. Some progress, however, was made in a few areas, such as the fortification of the Karelian Isthmus and in outlining a long-term development strategy for the artillery, including an equipment procurement policy designed to guarantee adequate capability in the event of mobilization, the latter the work of a special committee convened in 1921 with General Nenonen's backing.[96] The Hornborg defence review committee, which sat between 1923 and 1926, was intended to provide this missing overall survey of the state of the country's armed forces. Made up of a mixture of military officers and party politicians and working in something of the way of a modern parliamentary defence committee, it was entrusted with the task of providing a thorough analysis of Finland's military, political and geographical situation and a review of general military developments abroad and their impact on Finnish security policy.

The committee approached its brief by initiating a survey of the arms and equipment both stockpiled and in use by the armed forces, and attempting an analysis of some of the more general themes raised by the defence question, including the issue of the ideal size of force that should be available on mobilization. It was generally assumed in these projections that Finland would be solely responsible for the defence of Finnish territory and would be unable to call on the assistance of any outside forces. The committee came to the conclusion that a suitable force to guarantee military effectiveness would require 13 army divisions, in addition to naval and air force units, and it was on this projection that the committee's long-term programme for future defence planning was

95. Tervasmäki 1964, pp. 62—5; Huttunen VI 1968, pp. 346—7; Tanner 1966, pp. 90—2. Also see the speech made in Parliament by the Minister of Defence, K. Heinonen, on 27.9.1927 (VP 1927 ptk., pp. 340—2, 344—6).
96. Alajoki 1975, pp. 231, 236—7.

based.[97] A shortened version of the committee's findings was published in 1926 covering the then state of the country's armed forces, but excluding the committee's ideas on overall defence planning and its detailed estimates of manpower and logistics requirements.[98] This decision to exclude part of the committee's ideas from its published report was responsible, at least in part, for the fact that the committee's thinking failed to have any significant influence on overall attitudes towards defence needs. The calm which had descended over Europe after the storm of the war years, and which had had the effect of pushing defence-related questions out of the focus of public and political interest, also contributed to the modest response which greeted the report.

At the same time as the Hornborg committee was absorbed with the problems of outlining a general future strategy for the armed forces, tensions within the army itself, and more specifically between the German-trained and Russian-trained officers within the officer corps, had risen dangerously high. Their prominent role in the years preceding independence and in the activist opposition to the Russian administration had given the young generation of Jäger officers a self-confident sense of purpose, which contrasted sharply with the lower-key approach typical of the older generation of generally higher-ranking officers who had served in the Imperial Army, and whose background often made them the target for attacks from the more extreme elements of nationalist opinion. A programme of demands tacitly aimed at improving the position of the Jäger officers and exploiting this psychological imbalance appeared in the early spring of 1924, produced by a group of Jäger officers, including Lt. Col. J. W. Hägglund and Major Paavo Talvela among the most prominent of them, with the assistance of E. E. Kaila. In addition to advocating such relatively neutral aims as a detailed and thorough review of the mobilization issue and the setting-up of the proposed national military academy which had yet to be approved, the programme also included demands for the army to be purged of high-ranking Russian-trained officers, who were labelled as incompetent and unsuitable for service in a national army. Especial doubts were

97. Puolustusrevisionin mietintö (11.1.1926), pp. 76, 116—8, 130, 147 (SA).
98. Suomen puolustuskysymys (1926), p. 76.

voiced about the competence of Generals Wilkama and Enckell and a number of others, with the notable exclusion of General Nenonen, all of whom were subjected to bitter personal attacks and described as politically unreliable.[99] These criticisms closely paralleled the revelations made in the report produced by the Holman committee, which had appeared a little earlier, about the shortcomings in the defence force and its internal organisation, and which had indirectly pointed the finger of blame at the very same high-ranking former Russian army officers.

The threats of mass resignations of commissions made by Jäger officers to back up their demands that followed soon after only strengthened the hand of those opposed to both the Russian-trained officer élite and the political centre. President Ståhlberg was well aware that, despite his wide support in Parliament, he failed to enjoy comparable respect within the army and was unable to rely on it for support. Although circumstances had forced him to rely on ex-Imperial Army officers, despite the fact of their historical association with a form of government which had had little sympathy for and even less in common with his own liberal ideals, he was unwilling to have his hand forced on the issue. That Ståhlberg nevertheless sensed he would find himself with little option but to accede to the Jäger demands is reflected in his decision, at the most critical stage of the crisis in May 1924, to announce that he would not seek re-election at the end of his term of office at the beginning of March the following year.[100]

Although not personally involved in the events surrounding these issues, Mannerheim kept himself well-informed of the debate on the Jäger demands. Mannerheim's return to a central commanding role in the army was strongly advocated by General Hannes Ignatius, who pulled no punches in his criticism of the army's existing commanders, and particularly of General Wilkama and the various defence ministers which had served since independence, whom he described as having been the cause of

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99. See Kai Donner's speech of 25.2.1924 made in Helsinki and reported in US 26.2.1924 and HS 27.2.1924. Also 'PM puolustuslaitoksessamme nykyisin vallitsevasta tilanteesta' (Ståhlberg collection 83); Karttunen 1970, pp. 15—17, 21—9; Oscar Enckell 2.5.1952.
100. US 7.5.1924.

many of the army's shortcomings.[101] He also proposed leaving the job of weeding out all unsuitable and unpatriotic elements from the army to the future commander-in-chief, rather than any body set up by the government to handle the issue.

The most concerted political support for the Jäger officers' demands came from the Agrarian Party and from Agrarian Party papers such as *Ilkka* and *Maakansa*, which both took an active part in the debate.[102] Opinion on the issue within the right-wing National Coalition Party, however, was more divided, with a large number of members backing the demands, but with a group centred around Paavo Wirkkunen defending Wilkama.[103] The main body of opinion within the Swedish People's Party was favourable towards the Jäger officers, although this too was tempered by an element of support for the ex-Tsarist officers in question. The Progressives, together with *Helsingin Sanomat*, were less certain about the justification of the Jäger-inspired criticisms, which were seen as being, at least in part, political in intention and aimed at undermining Ståhlberg's position.[104] Something of a similar view was taken by the Social Democrats who, although feeling no real sympathy for the officers at the centre of the criticism, were willing to recognise their leadership and other qualities and saw the attempt by the Jäger officers to push through what amounted to a partisan reorganisation of the army on the Jägers' own terms as a case of pure politics aimed at opposing the Centre's increasingly powerful position.[105]

The threat of mass resignations of commissions made by the Jäger officers finally proved successful in producing some changes in the military leadership and beyond. Colonel Lauri Malmberg, a leading Jäger, was appointed Defence Minister in the new Ingman government which was formed in June of 1924 and promptly set in process a shake-up of top army posts, affecting both General Wilkama, who was despatched in August on a long fact-finding trip abroad, and General Enckell, who resigned. This was followed

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101. US 25.5.1924.
102. Mylly 1978, pp. 193—5; *Ilkka* 30.4.1924.
103. US 24.4.1924; *Iltalehti* 20.2.1924; P. Virkkunen 1954, pp. 232—44.
104. Hbl 27.4., 4.5., 11.5., 14.8., 12.10.1924; HS 29.2., 27.4., 1.5., 12.8., 7.9.1924.
105. SS 2.5., 7.5., 9.8.1924, 18.12.1925. See also Väinö Tanner's speech in Parliament on 8.5.1924 (VP 1924 ptk., p. 53).

up by a concerted policy of encouraging a number of lower-ranking ex-Tsarist officers to resign their positions, internal transfers, and voluntary and semi-voluntary resignations of commissions. The pressure for change within the army did not stop here, however. Further demands for a purge of the officer corps of what were seen as unreliable elements emerged later the same year, this time directed against Swedish-speaking officers. These were much more limited, however, and supported only by *Ilkka* and a few other Agrarian Party papers and the nationalist *Aitosuomalainen*.[106] These calls were also opposed from within the ranks of the Jäger officers themselves, among which those who had achieved highest rank were virtually entirely Swedish-speaking.

Jäger officers' chances of promotion to high rank continued to remain low, however, throughout the period of Ståhlberg's term of office and General Nenonen's as acting commander-in-chief. Only with the election of Relander as President in March 1925 did the situation improve and the route to the upper reaches of the command structure finally open up. Lt. Colonels Harald Öhqvist and Hugo Österman were appointed divisional commanders in the summer of 1925 and soon promoted to the rank of full colonel. Lt. Colonel Erik Heinrichs, who had served as Chief of the General Staff, was replaced by Lt. Col. K. M. Wallenius, who was also promoted to the rank of colonel. This swing in favour of appointing young Jäger officers, typically in their mid-thirties, reached its peak in 1926 with the appointment of Aarne Sihvo at the early age of 36 as the acting commander of the army, following the dismissal of Wilkama, and his promotion to the rank of Major-General.[107]

The resolution of the internal crisis within the army through the forced resignation or voluntary stepping aside of a large number of prominent ex-Tsarist officers, with the exception of General Nenonen and a few others, in favour of Jäger officers was widely

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106. See Malmberg's letter of 30.5.1924 to Ingman (Malmberg collection). Kai Donner: Anteckningar 8.7., 10.10., 27.11., 18.12.1924. Also the letters from A. Almqvist (31.12.1924), Hj. Söderman (28.3.1925) and Aarne Sihvo (18.7.1924) to K. Wilkama (Wilkama collection II/VA). Mylly 1978, p. 197; A. J. Alanen 1975, pp. 305—6, 311; *Aitosuomalainen* 3/1924; Hbl 23.10.1924; AU 22.10.1924; Wbl 31.10.1924.
107. Suomen Jääkärielämäkerrasto (1975).

described by those who had argued for the shake-up as a victory for patriotic national values. With the benefit of hindsight, one can see that it was far less positive than its advocates claimed at the time. By radically promoting young officers over their older colleagues, the army lost an important fund of experience and detailed technical knowledge which would have benefited its development, while the concentration on Jäger appointments also served to reinforce the dominance of the infantry in strategic and tactical planning at the expense of the other arms. Although not lacking in the virtues of youthful energy and dynamism, the new young generation of commanders did have their limitations, among the most obvious being their lack of experience in the workings of the General Staff and the leadership of large units.

Of those officers past over in the army's reorganisation programme, General Enckell was undoubtedly the most prominent. Despite his relative young age, he had had an exceptionally successful career in the Imperial Army, reaching the rank of colonel at the age of 34 in 1912 and serving as the head of Russian military intelligence. The Jäger demands calling for a reshuffle of commanding officers, however, had particularly singled out Enckell, describing his comprehensive defence plans for the Karelian Isthmus, based on defence in depth, as unreliable and betraying a poor awareness of defence needs.[108]

Tension within the army was nevertheless far from completely eliminated following the implementation of the reorganisation programme, and open arguments over promotion and command issues continued to flourish, albeit in muted form and largely restricted to sparring between different sections of the Jäger officer corps.[109]

The middle years of the decade saw the armed forces and defence-related issues receive relatively wide coverage in the press, partly as a result of the wranglings which surrounded the army's internal organisation and partly as a result of the army's role as a symbol of the country's new independent status, coverage which met with some satisfaction within the military establish-

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108. Arimo 1981, pp. 19—20.
109. Sihvo II 1956, pp. 183—6; Hbl 19.11.1927. For general coverage of the 1928—9 period, see Relander II 1968.

ment. This did not, however, provoke any significant divergence within the defence forces from the overall policy of jealously protecting their internal affairs as much as possible from the public gaze which had been adopted during the early years of independence. No great need was felt from within the army's ranks to keep society informed of military affairs and much emphasis was put on the confidential nature of information concerning the defence forces. Eirik Hornborg's decision to grant a press interview following the completion of his committee's report reviewing the defence forces was greeted with accusations that in doing so he had revealed confidential information, and the case was even taken to court.[110] Similarly indicative of the armed forces' sensitivity to public exposure was the reception given to Pentti Haanpää's collection of short stories, 'Kenttä ja kasarmi' (The Barracks and the Field), published in 1928. Haanpää's criticism of the harsh style of discipline favoured in the army and of the gulf existing between regular officers and recruits, based on his own experience of military life, was condemned by both the military establishment and much of conservative opinion as undermining the very existence of the army and its role in Finnish society, as well as the existing social order. This criticism effectively helped prevent further publication of his work for some time subsequently.

The creation of an adequate administrative department to handle foreign affairs and Finland's international relations had proved a thorny problem ever since the declaration of independence, both in terms of developing the necessary infrastructure and in recruiting suitable and competent personnel. Throughout the previous century, Finnish politics, as those of an autonomous grand duchy under the wing of the Russian Empire, had been virtually solely concerned with internal affairs. Familiarity with developments abroad and foreign issues in general had been extremely limited and restricted to the academic community and those sectors of the business world involved in foreign trade. Little was known about the intricacies of international politics and diplomacy and what knowledge that did exist by 1918 had largely

110. Hbl 28.2., 3.3., 13.3.1926.

been acquired through force of necessity during the tense first months of independence.

The first steps taken towards establishing a government department responsible for foreign affairs took the form of a series of snap, rapidly-improvised decisions taken in response to new areas of interest and concern as they arose, resulting in a rather erratic and unorganised pattern of development and expansion for the new department. The first real administrative decision in the field was taken in July 1918, with the founding of a new ministry to coordinate foreign policy planning and administration. For all its small size, with an initial staff running to only some 8 to 9, it nevertheless represented an important step forward in creating a base for future expansion.[111]

The close linkage of ministry policy on establishing legations abroad with the various swings in foreign policy within the government during this early period was reflected in the prominence and expansion of the legation in Berlin headed by Edward Hjelt during the period of the dominance of pro-German foreign policy in 1918, and in the fact that it was only after the First World War had ended that legations were set up in other Western capitals to supplement the work of the legation in Stockholm, which had up until then carried much of the burden of ensuring communications with Western and Central Europe. Following the wider international recognition of the country's independence which took place in the spring of 1919, attention turned to the question of Finland's overall level of need for diplomatic representation abroad. Opinions varied as to how extensive a coverage was required by a small country of Finland's standing, although there was wide agreement that the total number of legations and consulates would be relatively small, following the rapid abandonment of the idea of establishing some form of representation in every national capital in favour of a more realistic, selective approach. In planning the shape of the future foreign ministry and diplomatic service, the government drew heavily on the Swedish example, both in the area of general ideas and on the question of deciding the scale of an adequate diplomatic corps. Long-term planning strategies were hindered,

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111. Paasivirta 1968, pp. 54—7.

however, by the strong sense of caution which existed in many political circles in the early years over the whole question of diplomatic representation abroad at legation level in peacetime and its ultimate necessity. Significantly more agreement existed on the need for a network of consular representation abroad, which was seen as more directly assisting and protecting Finnish commercial interests.[112]

Finland initially established legations abroad only in the capitals of the great powers and in neighbouring countries in Scandinavia and the Baltic states. Despite Finland's lack of any professional diplomats in many of the newly-independent states of Europe such as Czechoslovakia, Europe nevertheless dominated the Finnish diplomatic effort during the early years of independence, with the country's only legations outside the region in the United States and Japan. This clear bias towards a European-based diplomacy went hand in hand with the limited nature and extent of Finnish foreign trade typical of the period. This largely dictated, for instance, why Finland lacked any permanent diplomats in the whole of Latin America throughout the early 1920s. In comparison with Sweden's diplomatic presence abroad, Finland's was somewhat more modest, both in absolute numbers and extent.[113]

Although Sweden served as the most immediate source of ideas and comparison for the architects of Finland's new diplomatic service, it was to France and French diplomacy which they looked for their major inspiration. This was particularly reflected in the Foreign Ministry's keenness to recruit staff with a good command of French and well versed in the French way of doing things to handle protocol affairs. Overall recruitment in the early stages of the ministry's existence was essentially unsystematic and geared largely to fulfilling immediate needs rather than satisfying more long-term requirements. A number of people were recruited on the basis of their past experience of working abroad for the volunteer movement and the independence cause during the war years and before, their appointments being sometimes little more than thinly-veiled rewards for past services. Some of those recruited in

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112. Paasivirta 1961, pp. 245—7; Paasivirta 1968, pp. 48—50, 67, 137—40, 153, 225—6.
113. Paasivirta 1968, pp. 147, 184, 301.

this way often proved less than ideal diplomats, hampered by their typically strong personal convictions and habit of operating independently, which sometimes conflicted with government interests and requirements. Recruitment in this early stage also focused on individuals known to possess in-depth knowledge on foreign issues, linguistic or other relevant skills. Among these, academics and those in the upper reaches of the business community and in Swedish-speaking, rather than Finnish-speaking society were particularly prominent. As the Foreign Ministry consolidated its position and became a more attractive career prospect, however, a wider range of applicants began to apply and be accepted. Unlike those who had begun their careers earlier, these new recruits were largely Finnish-speaking, a fact which fairly rapidly led to Finnish-speakers assuming the majority in the ministry.[114]

Given this background, it is not surprising therefore that perhaps the largest single problem facing the Foreign Ministry in its early years lay in the lack of experience affecting virtually all of its staff in Helsinki and the country's diplomats abroad. Appointments nevertheless had to be filled quickly and new legations set up to take on the task of representing the country abroad, and many new appointees found themselves despatched abroad with little advance preparation for their new responsibilities. It took some time for the custom of regular periods abroad interspersed with postings in Helsinki and a policy of providing diplomats with a steady variety of responsibilities to be established and begin to create a body of experienced diplomats. Also typical of the period was the tendency for the younger generation of diplomats to be concentrated in the Foreign Ministry itself, with the older, more experienced generation dominating posts abroad. While undoubtedly making the best use of the limited personnel resources to hand, this practice also inevitably contributed to creating an underlying friction between legations abroad and the ministerial hierarchy in Helsinki. This tension between the generations also made itself felt in the political disagreements which surfaced within the ministry in the early days of Ståhlberg's presidency in the shape of some of the older generation of

114. Paasivirta—Mylly 1969, p. 96.

diplomats' difficulty, if not unwillingness, to come to terms with the republican, moderate values which the new President represented and which were often quite at odds with their own ingrained, conservative view of the world. Conflicts and tensions also later emerged between conservatives who had supported monarchist plans and more liberal elements within the ministry.[115]

It would be idle to pretend that the establishment of a foreign ministry and diplomatic corps virtually from scratch and with inadequate financial and personnel resources did not take an inevitable toll on the Finnish diplomacy which was pursued during the early years of independence. This took the shape of an underlying uncertainty and caution in all the activities of both the ministry in Helsinki and Finland's legations and consulates abroad for much of the 1920s. Something of the essentially conservative and cautious nature of Finnish diplomacy during the 1920s was reflected in its adherence to the tenets of traditional, established diplomatic practice which emphasised political questions almost to the exclusion of other issues, to an extent which was no longer common in the rest of the post-war world. This proved particularly disadvantageous on commercial issues, which often remained a relatively alien domain for many Finnish diplomats of the period. This underestimation of commercial questions, coupled with the general growing pains affecting the Foreign Ministry and Finnish diplomacy as a whole, only served to further limit both the ministry's and the country's diplomats' potential to improve and expand Finland's network of international relations.

5. In search of a foreign policy

The post-war political map in the Baltic area exhibited a number of contrasts to that which had prevailed prior to the First World War. Helped by the military defeats suffered by Russia and Germany, five new independent states, Finland, the three Baltic republics and Poland had emerged in the region, raising the total number of states with a Baltic coastline from four to nine and making the

115. See Ståhlberg's letter of 15.12.1920 to Wrede (Wrede collection). K. Holsti 1963, p. 222.

Baltic itself a sea dominated, if not politically then at least geographically, by a majority of small states.[116] The weakening of the power and influence of the established great powers in the region and the corresponding rise of the small states encouraged politicians in a number of countries in the area, including Finland, to put forward various plans aimed at declaring the Baltic a neutral zone and thereby guaranteeing great power non-involvement in the future, and at ensuring regional stability through a process of cooperation and common agreement. The general desire was to consolidate the already existing low level of arms build-up in the region and prevent possible attempts by any one power to gain clear military superiority.

Within the Finnish camp, these plans were seen from something of a dual perspective. While Rudolf Holsti, the Foreign Minister, emphasised their value as a means of countering the threat posed by the Soviet navy, Rafael Erich, Prime Minister between 1920 and 1921 when these ideas first took real wing, tended to see in a neutral Baltic the possibility of opening up a wider measure of positive cooperation between the small states of the area.[117] The question of whether these plans should include an attempt to close the Danish straits to naval shipping soon emerged as an important issue as discussion on the project developed. Any move of this type would have affected the interests, of both the Soviet Union, attracted by the possibility of closing the Baltic to Western naval interference, and those of the Western powers, Britain because of her interest in the Åland Islands and France because of her desire to ensure the continuity of maritime communications with Poland. The inability of the states in the region to come to any form of agreement on a common plan, together with the multitude of problems surrounding the practical aspects of implementing and supervising the maintenance of a neutral zone in the Baltic, gradually, however, served to push the issue out of the forefront of the minds of politicians in the region and finally to bury it altogether.

Following the stabilisation of the situation in the Baltic during the early 1920s, which took place despite the failure of the

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116. Kalela 1971, pp. 38—9.
117. Lönnroth 1959, pp. 57—9; Kalela 1971, pp. 40—1.

neutrality zone idea to really get off the ground, attention in Finland returned in large part to the country's own security problems and continuing uneasy relations with Russia and the fears and uncertainties which they generated, and which the successful signing of the Tartu peace treaty failed to dispel. While there was a strong desire to consider the whole Russian question as resolved, few of those involved in foreign policy planning could ignore the fact that much remained to be done in developing a more secure border with Russia. This was further highlighted by the fall-off which took place in the overall level of Western interest in the Baltic area after peaking in the period immediately following the end of the First World War, and marked by the departure of the Royal Navy squadron which had been present since the end of the war from the Baltic during the course of 1921 and the increasingly reduced presence of French naval units in the area.[118] The unease felt over future Finnish-Soviet relations was matched to some extent by that colouring Finnish-Swedish relations. The unresolved fate of the Åland Islands, in the hands of the League of Nations by common agreement, served to maintain cool relations between the two countries.

There was relatively little enthusiasm among the Finnish leadership at the beginning of the 1920s for the adoption of a policy of national neutrality, largely because such a policy was generally thought incapable of satisfying Finland's major security needs or providing the country with satisfactory relations with Finland's neighbours. Foreign policy thinking had begun instead to increasingly concentrate on the possibility of developing ties and closer contacts with the border states. Sharing a common origin in the break-up of the Russian Empire and together forming something of a geographical continuum, Finland and the three Baltic republics all possessed superficially broadly similar security needs. Historically, however, many factors divided the four countries, with Finland in particular differing from the Baltic republics in the length of her political traditions and by virtue of her more peripheral geopolitical location and close links to Scandinavia. Poland to the south, the other new state in the eastern Baltic, represented even more of an exception, with foreign

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118. Marcus Peltier 21.5.1977.

and security policy problems focused much more firmly along a purely Soviet-German axis. Despite the common desire for joint discussions covering regional problems and for exploring ways of coordinating national policies in response to them, the hoped-for common approach failed to materialise during the early stages of contact between the four countries during 1919, as a result of disagreements over a possible common response to Soviet proposals for peace negotiations, mainly due to Finnish resistance to the various ideas put forward.

The stabilisation of the political balance in the Baltic area brought by the signing by Finland and the three Baltic republics of separate peace treaties with the Soviet Union, however, saw a renewed enthusiasm for joint talks. Particular hopes were attached to the possibility of discussions on ways of cooperating on adopting a common policy strategy towards the Soviet Union and on developing a system of joint consultation on issues coming up for consideration at the League of Nations. The discussion process was given added momentum by the agreement reached at the conference held in July 1921 in Helsinki between the foreign ministers of the border states to continue and develop a regional dialogue. Background impetus to this decision was undoubtedly provided by the Soviet Union's occupation shortly previously of independent Georgia. Estonia and Latvia were particularly active in advocating the idea of a border states federation.[119]

The proximity of Finland to the Baltic countries was an important factor for Finland, making for a number of shared interests and encouraging support for increased economic ties between Finland and the border states and the development of closer cultural relations. On the question of developing closer political cooperation between the four countries, however, there was much less unanimity, although the continued independence of the Baltic countries was nevertheless widely perceived as being in Finland's interests. The idea of a defensive alliance between the border states found most favour among members of the Progressive and Agrarian parties. The concern felt in these circles at the possibility of a strengthening of Russian power and of a potential closer Russian-German relationship was well brought out in the public

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119. Schauman 1962, p. 134; K. Holsti 1963, p. 178; Ingman: Politica 21.5.1921.

statements of the Foreign Minister, Rudolf Holsti, and the commentaries which appeared in *Helsingin Sanomat* on the issue. In these, the Baltic republics, together with Finland, were seen as forming a barrier, capable, it was hoped, of preventing the development of any significant alliance between Russia and Central Europe. As such a barrier was seen as likely to be as much in the general interest of the West as that of the immediate Baltic region, hopes were also high for possible Western support for a closer alliance between the border states.[120]

Following the agreement of a peace treaty with the Soviet Union and the acceptance of Finland as a member of the League of Nations, both of which served to consolidate Finland's international position, Finnish foreign policy attention returned to the question of achieving a favourable solution to the Åland Islands issue.[121]

Official policy stressing Finland's right of sovereignty over the Islands had come to enjoy an increasingly wide measure of support within political opinion by the end of 1919, while those opposing it had consistently lost ground, even in Swedish-speaking southern Ostrobothnia, where sympathy for the Åland Islands' population's secessionist aims had previously been prominent. This shift was underwritten by the decision of the Swedish People's Party and the Social Democrats to come round to backing the official position, a move which effectively eliminated any remaining mainland support which those among the Åland Islands population advocating secession from Finland and annexation to Sweden might still have hoped for.

An important fact in shaping opposition to any secession of the Islands among the country's overall Swedish-speaking community lay in the traditionally dominant role played by national interests, as distinct from regional or local interests, in determining the policies promoted by the community's political leadership. The respect enjoyed within the Swedish-speaking community by the activist movement and its uncompromising nationalist ideals also indirectly acted to concentrate attention on the importance of

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120. HS 14.12.1920.
121. HS 10.1.1921; *Iltalehti* 3.12.1920.

safeguarding national interests. Opposition to any changes in the country's territorial integrity was further strengthened in the case of the Åland Islands question by the fact that, was the area to be transferred to Sweden, Finland would lose an important Swedish-speaking region entirely and the Swedish-speaking community itself a significant part of its population. Such a loss would also have amounted to a dangerous body blow to the continuing dynamism of the rest of the Swedish-speaking community in Finland, as some commentators were quick to point out.[122] Fears were also expressed that, unchecked, the separatist views of the Åland Islands population might easily foster increased suspicion among the Finnish-speaking majority towards the whole of the Swedish-speaking minority and lead to the latter's patriotism being increasingly questioned, thereby strengthening the hand of the more extreme elements within the nationalist movement. While not supporting the local population's separatist aims, the mainland Swedish-speaking community was nevertheless not slow to argue the importance of granting a wide measure of local autonomy to the Åland Islands. There was also widespread concern that continuing tension and indecision over the issue could only serve to further sour relations between Finland and Sweden.

The Social Democrats, despite their support for the concept of national self-determination as a general democratic ideal, were unable to come to any clear formulation of their attitude to the Åland question for much of 1919. A number of leading figures within the party supported the idea of holding a referendum to decide the fate of the Islands, although only at a later date after tempers had had time to cool.[123] It was only at the party congress in December 1919 that it was finally decided, in line with the trend which had come to dominate non-socialist opinion, that retaining sovereignty over the Islands was ultimately in the nation's best interests. This decision, for all the closeness of the vote, came to determine future pronouncements by the party on the issue. Like the Swedish People's Party, the Social Democrats, however, also

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122. AU 23.5.1919; 2.8.1920.
123. SS 5.4.1919; *Sosialisti* 22.3.1919. See also Väinö Wuolijoki's and J. W. Keto's speeches in Parliament on 28.10.1919 (VP 1919 ptk., p. 1242, 1250). Also H. Soikkanen 1975, p. 349.

favoured the granting of local self-government to the Islands.[124]

The tension which had built up between Sweden and Finland over the Åland Islands finally broke out into an open crisis in the early summer of 1920, following the Finnish Parliament's approval of legislation giving the Islands local autonomy. In appearing to bury once and for all any possibility of realising local hopes aimed at transferring the Islands to Swedish jurisdiction, this legislation gained little real support on the Islands. Local efforts along these lines had reached their peak the previous year when a delegation under Julius Sundblom had travelled to Paris to put the local population's case to the Western powers and a special petition had been presented to the Allies calling for the Islands to become part of Sweden.[125] The failure of these appeals to produce any movement on the part of the West had served to unsettle local faith in the possible role to be played by the great powers in deciding the fate of the Islands along the lines of the 1856 international agreement on non-fortification of the Islands, and which had been inspired in large part by the West's more recent advocacy of the principle of national self-determination.

This disappointment was only reinforced when the Allies decided towards the end of 1919 to transfer responsibility for deciding the fate of the Islands from the Paris peace conference to the League of Nations. The seeming impossibility of achieving a rapid and favourable decision through these international means prompted local leaders on the Islands to turn back to Sweden in the hope of getting a more sympathetic hearing for their cause. Although aware that any final decision over the issue was not for Sweden to make, they nevertheless appealed directly and publicly to the Swedish King and government for assistance in resolving the issue in their favour by putting renewed diplomatic pressure on Western governments. By openly appealing to the Swedish authorities, however, local leaders made the prospect of conflict with the Finnish government a virtual certainty.[126]

An offer of talks on implementing the new law on local self-

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124. See Väinö Voionmaa's speech in Parliament on 28.10.1919 (VP 1919 ptk., p. 1255). Also SDP:n puoluekokous ptk., pp. 155—8 and appendix to the previous pp. 147—63, and SS 24.11.1920.
125. Paasivirta 1961, pp. 174—6; Salminen 1979, p. 83.
126. Salminen 1979, pp. 104—15.

government made by a Finnish government delegation under the leadership of the Prime Minister, Rafael Erich, on a visit to the Islands' capital Mariehamn at the beginning of June 1920 was defiantly rejected by the two main local political leaders, Julius Sundblom and Carl Björkman, earning both a prison sentence and a transfer to Turku. A heated exchange of notes between the Swedish and Finnish governments resulted, with the latter particularly incensed at what were seen as Swedish attempts to ferment unrest on the Islands, finally reaching its peak in Sweden's decision to recall her envoy from Helsinki.[127]

In response to the crisis, Britain proposed in the early summer of 1920 the beginning of discussions on the Åland issue at the League of Nations. Faced with the overall instability affecting the Baltic area, including the continuing Soviet-Polish conflict and the still unresolved Soviet-Finnish peace treaty, however, the proposal amounted to little more than a holding move by the British government, designed primarily to pacify tempers in the dispute, instead of marking any real British desire to finally achieve a solution to the problem. As a result of the British move, the Council of the League of Nations decided on 12 July to set up a special committee to review the whole problem and the League's potential role in resolving it. In concluding that the question clearly had implications extending beyond those of a solely internal Finnish affair and was essentially international in nature, the committee formally confirmed the League's desire to exercise its powers of arbitration in the dispute.[128]

A further committee was duly appointed by the League on 20 September to consider possible political solutions to the question. The appointment of this new body, again partly as a result of British diplomatic efforts, meant in effect a further postponement of any final resolution of the issue. Members of the new committee visited Stockholm, Helsinki and Mariehamn to gauge the strength of opinion among the three sides involved.[129] The report produced by the committee in April 1921 was to prove decisive. In it, the

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127. Ibid., pp. 115—6; Rafael Erich: Päiväkirja 8.6.1920.
128. Gihl 1951, pp. 422—4; Barros 1968, pp. 266—7, 281, 293; Rafael Erich: Päiväkirja 10.9.1920.
129. Gihl 1951, pp. 424—6; Barros 1968, p. 296; Birger Johansson 28.6.1961.

committee argued that the Islands belonged to Finland and that they should be demilitarised and an international agreement, along the lines of the previous nineteenth-century one barring all fortifications in the area, be drawn up for signing by the great powers and the Baltic states.

The committee's findings were generally welcomed in Finland, being seen as finally bringing the prospect of a solution to the long-running dispute into sight and as upholding the basis of the Finnish case for continued sovereignty in the region. In Sweden, in contrast, they were understandably greeted with rather more muted enthusiasm.[130] Tension in the rest of the Baltic region had by the time of the publication of the League's findings substantially subsided, following the signing of a Soviet-Polish peace in Riga in March 1921 and an agreement between Finland and the Soviet Union in October 1920. These effectively removed, in the League's view, as well as that of the British diplomats who had played such an instrumental role in leading the international effort on the issue, the last remaining obstacles to an agreement over the Islands.

The final decision by the League of Nations on the Åland case, taken on 24 June 1921, closely followed the committee's view supporting the legitimacy of Finland's historical, territorial and economic claims to sovereignty over the Islands. Finland was nevertheless recommended to reinforce the already approved legislation allowing for local self-government in the region with a set of separate guarantees specifically designed to protect the long-term status of Swedish as the local language. A new international agreement was proposed to cover the area's demilitarised status, in line with the arrangement arrived at in 1856.[131] This agreement, providing for the Islands' demilitarisation and declaration a neutral zone, was finally signed in November 1921 by the Western powers and the states around the Baltic, with the exception of the Soviet Union, which refused to endorse the plan. Finland was given responsibility for ensuring the first-line defence of the area against any possible attack in the event of the Islands being

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130. Barros 1968, pp. 312—8, 320—1; HS 20.4., 23.4.1921; US 20.4., 23.4.1921; Hbl 20.4.1921; SS 19.4.1921.
131. Gihl 1951, p. 429; Barros 1968, pp. 327—33.

threatened at a time of international crisis. In the case of such a crisis continuing, the treaty provided for the League of Nations, with the assistance of the signatory powers, to take further action to guarantee the Islands' defence.[132]

The League of Nations' judgement, for all its predictability following the organisation's previous statements on the dispute, came as a heavy blow to the local population on the Åland Islands themselves. The sense of local disappointment was only intensified by the fact that the leading paper on the Islands, *Åland*, had consistently led its readers to believe that the islanders' case enjoyed considerable sympathy in the West. The clearly pro-Finnish nature of the League's final judgement provoked a wave of strong dissatisfaction and hostility towards the international body and the great powers associated with it and, above all, towards Britain, which was considered as the major mover behind the decision, for having betrayed local hopes.[133] There was little bitterness towards Sweden in contrast, which tended to be seen by the Islands' population as having done everything it could to advance their interests. All that remained for many islanders was a vague hope that the future would see justice, as they saw it, ultimately prevail.

Although powerless to change the League's pronouncement, local political leaders on the Islands remained faced with the problem of how to react to a situation in which, by international agreement, the Islands had been granted, not the total secession they had called for, but little more than the self-government which Finland had been willing to provide, with or without the League's intervention. The latter proposal had been rejected to all intents and purposes at the time of the visit of Erich's delegation the previous summer. As much as local leaders' instincts told them to refuse to accept the League's judgement, it was difficult for them to remain completely passive to events and refuse any form of cooperation with the Finnish authorities. There was always the danger that, by adopting a policy of non-cooperation, the local population could possibly lose all chance of handling its own affairs, even if it was to take place only within the framework of the

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132. Gihl 1951, pp. 432—3.
133. *Åland* 18.3., 30.7., 17.10.1921.

Finnish form of local autonomy. Unable to ignore this political reality and unable to look to further Swedish support, local politicians and the local population as a whole had little choice in the final analysis but to come to terms with the situation and try and make the new system work to their best advantage.

The issue of closer contact between Finland and the border states, which had been so prominent in Finnish foreign policy debate during 1920 and 1921, gradually came to assume an increasingly central part in foreign policy thinking at the beginning of 1922, pointing towards the possible development of a more formal alliance relationship. Developments in this direction were accelerated by the emergence of an open crisis in Finnish-Soviet relations following the outbreak of a minor peasant uprising in northern East Karelia in November 1921 and the dispatch of a small Finnish volunteer force numbering some 500 men, led by a number of those who had participated in past interventions across the border, to assist the rebels. The rebellion was quickly condemned by the Soviet authorities as having been engineered by Finnish agitators and as aimed at threatening the security of the Murmansk railway. A strong show of force in response was decided on, and some 13,000 troops were sent to quell the uprising and a number of additional divisions concentrated along the Soviet-Finnish border further south on the Karelian Isthmus to forestall any further Finnish moves and put pressure on the Finnish government.[134] An exchange of strongly-worded notes between the two governments followed, with both sides disputing the cause of the uprising and the events that had surrounded it, and the possible consequences it held for future bilateral relations.

The uprising and the Finnish intervention also provoked an extensive and impassioned debate within Finland itself, reopening many of the old disagreements on foreign and domestic policy going back to the years immediately before and after independence. Much attention was given to the question of whether the Soviet Union had complied with the terms of the Tartu peace agreement in granting a reasonable measure of local self-government to the Karelian region. Virtually all parties, except for

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134. Jääskeläinen 1961, p. 92; Korhonen I 1966, p. 59.

the extreme Left, were united in arguing that it had not. This near unanimity allowed some sections of the Right to mount a renewed attack on the peace treaty itself, which was supposed to have guaranteed Karelian rights and which had been opposed by the Right before its signing as being prejudicial to Finland's, and by inference, Karelia's best interests. The main brunt of this criticism was directed at the centre parties and their moderate brand of foreign policy, together with the Vennola-led Progressive and Agrarian-based government, all of which were attacked for their lack of determination in standing up for Finnish rights on the East Karelian issue.[135]

The Social Democrats, while joining the non-socialist parties in criticising the Soviet authorities' attitude towards the question of local autonomy for the Karelian region, were quick, however, to make plain their opposition to armed intervention across the border, demanding that the Vennola government do everything in its power to prevent illegal border crossings and maintain a neutral stand on the uprising. The socialists feared that the events in East Karelia could lead to serious difficulties in Finnish-Soviet relations likely to undermine Finland's overall national interests, as they made plain in Parliament during December 1921.[136] Further to the Left, the Socialist Labour Party, in contrast both to the Social Democrats and the rest of Finnish political opinion, saw the uprising in the Uhtua area as potentially likely to overshadow the future of the recently-established communist Karelian Workers' Commune, and aligned itself behind the Soviet interpretation of events. A public appeal by the party leadership calling for the defence of Soviet Russia against those committed to its overthrow was only made in mid-January 1922, however, when the uprising was drawing to a close. It proved sufficient nevertheless for the leadership of the party to be imprisoned on the orders of the Minister of the Interior, Heikki Ritavuori. The latter action, however, was not enough to prevent Ritavuori, who had been the butt of much right-wing criticism for some time and now became the subject of a number of particularly sharp attacks for his uncompromising attitude towards closing the eastern border

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135. Hautala 1979, pp. 8—9, 16—21.
136. SS 8.12.1921; *Kansan Työ* 23.12.1921.

against refugees from Karelia, from being assassinated shortly afterwards by a right-wing extremist.[137]

Holsti's enthusiasm for exploring the possibilities offered by closer links between the border states was reinforced during 1921 and 1922 as a result of his belief that such ties could provide Finland with a way out from the crisis which had developed over East Karelia, and which he saw as likely to heighten the problem of Finland's isolation. His assessment of the situation was also based on the assumption that the Western powers would be willing to support the signing of an alliance agreement between the various border states.[138] Within government circles, Holsti's proposed initiative was met with initial cautious support from Ståhlberg and Ritavuori, although both resisted linking any such arrangement too directly with the crisis with the Soviet Union. In deciding to put his weight behind this approach, Ståhlberg stressed the cultural and political dynamism of the newly-independent Baltic republics and the potential that existed for exploiting this in some form of closer regional cooperation.[139] Vennola also cautiously aligned himself behind the idea and worked to gain it greater support.

Active interest along similar lines had also been evident from the late autumn onwards in Poland. The overall aim of Polish foreign policy, as it emerged from 1919 on, had been focused on the idea of developing a loose alliance directed against possible future Soviet and German expansion, embracing as wide a number of the smaller states in Eastern and Central Europe as possible and running north to south across the Continent. Finland was envisaged as the northernmost potential member of any such grouping.[140] The extent of backing existing for a joint policy of this type was sounded out at the end of 1921 by Colonel Posjerski during a visit to Helsinki. Colonel Yrjö Elfvengren, linked to the Russian emigré leader Boris Savinkov, was also active at around the same time in trying to establish contact with the Finnish military establishment.[141]

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137. *Suomen Työmies* 17.1., 18.1.1922; Hautala 1979, pp. 55—7.
138. K. Holsti 1963, pp. 160—2; Ingman: Politica 10.1., 25.1.1922.
139. K. J. Ståhlberg 25.4.1952.
140. See Boris Gyllenbögel's reports from Warsaw dated 15.2. and 18.10.1920 (UM 5 C 13). Also Polvinen II 1971, pp. 337—8.
141. 'PM ulkomaalaisten toiminnasta Helsingissä vuosien 1921—22 vaiheessa' (Kai Donner collection).

Progress on developing the border states policy initiative proved slow in Finland, however. It was held back by the lack of complete unanimity towards it within the government itself and the difficulties the latter encountered in assembling sufficient parliamentary backing for any such alliance. Support was most forthcoming from the two centre parties making up the government coalition, the Progressives and the Agrarians. Among the non-socialist opposition parties, opinions were more divided. The National Coalition only finally aligned itself behind the proposal with reluctance, stressing the need for the government to beware of over-committing Finland, while the Swedish People's Party remained split on the issue.[142]

General Mannerheim, an important figure on the Right, although no longer directly involved in politics, declared himself sympathetic to an alliance with Poland, but against one with the three Baltic republics. This was in line with his view expressed back in the autumn of 1919 that the Baltic countries would be unlikely to be able to maintain their sovereignty against the more powerful interests of the larger powers surrounding them.[143] Departing from some of their earlier statements on the issue, the attitude of the Social Democrats towards an active policy of cooperation with the border states, and in particular the possible signing of a treaty of alliance, became increasingly hostile as time went on. This shift was largely motivated by the strong suspicions felt within socialist circles towards what was seen as the adventurist style of politics being pursued by Poland, coupled with fears that any alliance between the border states might possibly be used in Finland as the basis for aggressive operations directed against Russia.[144]

It was against this background of somewhat fragmented, but nevertheless relatively extensive support for his initiative, and a commitment by the government to back a possible defensive alliance should one materialise, that Holsti took part in the joint negotiations held between representatives of the border states in

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142. K Holsti 1963, pp. 186—91; Kalela 1971, pp. 62—3; Hautala 1979, pp. 107—22; Wrede 1923 II, pp. 264—5.
143. Hautala 1979, p. 103; Ingman: Politica 8.2.1922. See also a telegram from Paris dated 21.10.1919 (Hugo Suolahti collection 2).
144. Hautala 1979, pp. 126, 131, 147; SS 24.1., 31.1.1920, 20.3.1922.

Warsaw in mid-March 1922. Holsti's personal enthusiasm for such an arrangement nevertheless continued to raise a number of political hackles among those less convinced of the policy's overall wisdom. The negotiations between the Finnish, Estonian, Latvian and Polish delegates in Warsaw, however, failed to produce the defence treaty Holsti and others had hoped for. The outcome was an ordinary alliance agreement, restricting military issues to a clause allowing for discussions between the signatory states on joint action in the event of one of them becoming the object of hostile military aggression.

The publication of the draft agreement in Finland provoked an extensive debate of its possible benefits and disadvantages, reflecting the far from unanimous support the border states policy as a whole enjoyed. Much of both party political and individual criticism focused on the dominant role which had been taken by Holsti in advocating such an agreement. While the centre parties maintained their support for the government's decision to align the country along a border state axis, the Right stressed that the Warsaw agreement offered Finland inadequate security guarantees against the threat posed by Soviet Russia, and might contribute to a worsening of Finland's friendly relations with Germany. The Social Democrats largely repeated their earlier criticism of the wisdom of entering into any alliance relationship with the border states and their fears that any such treaty might possibly drag the country into unwanted conflicts and thereby undermine Finland's overall long-term international position.[145]

Opposition to the proposed agreement also made itself felt within certain elements of the Finnish diplomatic corps, which moved with surprising alacrity to try and prevent its ratification. Ossian Donner in London and Carl Enckell in Paris worked together in a joint attempt to find evidence of Western resistance or scepticism towards the agreement to forward to the Foreign Ministry in Helsinki. The Finnish envoy in Berlin, Harri Holma, privately contacted the leadership of the National Coalition Party, already concerned at the possibilities the agreement held for bringing Finland into future conflict with Germany, to communicate the German Foreign Ministry's dislike of the agreement and of

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145. K. Holsti 1963, pp. 195—7; US 6.4.1922; SS 22.4.1922.

the other moves proposed for closer Baltic cooperation.[146]

The collapse of the uprising in East Karelia in February 1922 and with it the elimination of the crisis which it had precipitated in Finnish-Soviet relations, followed by the signing in mid-April by the Soviet Union and Germany of the Rapallo pact, however, put something of a new complexion on the whole border state question for the Finnish authorities, forcing them to rethink their earlier position. The Rapallo pact, marking as it did a clear sign of renewed activity by the Soviet Union and Germany and one promising further initiatives from both countries in the future, raised a number of question marks over the direction of future Finnish foreign policy. In particular, Rapallo opened up a number of hitherto unforseen possible scenarios unfavourable to the signatories of the Warsaw agreement, especially Poland, the most exposed of the five countries and, to a lesser extent, the small Baltic republics. It was feared that the pact might mark a prelude to a restoration of the historic relationship which had existed between Russia and Germany prior to 1914, thereby effectively taking the carpet out from underneath the recently agreed Baltic alliance.

The Vennola government's view that the changed situation provided the border states with even more reason to intensify their joint cooperation failed to convince Parliament. When it came to a vote, Parliament refused to ratify the Warsaw agreement, even despite a last-minute backdown by the government on inclusion of the article covering military consultations. The Social Democrats and the National Coalition joined forces at the beginning of May to push through a vote of no-confidence in Rudolf Holsti, who had played such a prominent part in developing the border states policy, which was accepted by a majority of 96-62, causing the government to resign and effectively marking the end of the policy which had led up to the Warsaw initiative.

The period following its rejection witnessed a tacit reassessment of foreign policy priorities. The aggressive tone which had been taken by some sections of political opinion with regard to foreign

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146. See the memoranda referring to the visits to the French Foreign Ministry by the Finnish envoy C. Enckell on 28.2. and 8.3.1922 (AAEF, Finlande 16). Also Harri Holma's letter of 7.3.1922 to Eino Suolahti (Eino Suolahti collection).

policy issues and which had focused around a determination to underline Finland's new independent role in the world, and in the Baltic region in particular, fell off appreciably as it began to be more widely accepted that Finland's interests might be best served by maintaining a low international profile. A major background factor in shaping this development undoubtedly lay in the general shift taking place in the international situation in Europe at the time, as the 'sturm und drang' period, which had followed the end of the First World War and the consolidation of the post-war balance of power, drew to a close. European attitudes towards the Soviet Union were also changing, with the latter beginning to be seen, as time went on, as much less the threat to European society that it had appeared to be to many Western observers in the immediate wake of the Revolution. The adoption of the NEP policy and the internal party struggles which emerged after Lenin's death in 1924, together with the reduced attention given to Comintern, were widely interpreted as indicative of a shift in Soviet interests towards a more domestic orientation and away from one focused on propagating an aggressive revolutionary message. Finnish fears of the threat posed by the Soviet Union to the country's continued independent existence similarly receded, in line with this general readjustment of Western views. Although the ultimate ideological threat posed by Bolshevism was not ignored, it did tend increasingly to be pushed into the background.

The sense of relative freedom felt by Finnish policy-makers following the stabilisation of the general situation in Europe was especially welcomed as it marked a substantial break with the previous period, when the country had enjoyed very little real room for manoeuvre. The sense of relief it inspired and the prospect of increased flexibility it held out was, however, allowed, in part at least, to distract attention from the need to clarify the overall direction of future foreign policy and consolidate Finland's relations abroad. This was particularly evident in the case of relations with the Soviet Union and in the inability of Finnish policy-makers to develop a definite foreign policy towards the Soviet state. Following the formal establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, which had given Finland a legation in Moscow and a consulate in Leningrad, no real attempt was made to develop diplomatic links beyond what was considered strictly necessary. There was much support for the

view that Finland would be best guided in her relations with her eastern neighbour by the general trend of international attitudes towards the Soviet Union. The proponents of this view stressed that Finland would be unwise to commit herself to any diplomatic initiatives which went beyond those of the Western powers and the Baltic republics and Poland.[147]

Following the abandonment of the Warsaw agreement and the wider border states policy it was a part of, the overall trend of Finnish foreign policy thinking shifted towards non-alignment rather than strict neutrality. In practice, this essentially relatively vague policy approximated to a compromise between the earlier pro-border states policy and a pro-Scandinavian approach, with a slight bias towards the latter. Despite the rejection of the Warsaw agreement, contact with the border states, far from disappearing altogether, continued, albeit in a more muted form than previously. Regular meetings between the foreign ministers of the border states continued to take place for a few years and joint discussions on common foreign policy problems were similarly maintained. Efforts were also made in the direction of ensuring some measure of policy coordination at the League of Nations. The idea of a Baltic alliance did not completely disappear and resurfaced at intervals over the following few years, but it failed to generate any significant interest or lead to any long-term progress towards closer political ties between the countries in the region. Discussions increasingly tended to focus around smaller-scale, specific issues, such as bilateral trade and cultural relations.[148]

In the area of Finland's relations with Sweden in the post-1922 period, political initiatives and discussion about their development generally proved most forthcoming from the political parties than from government sources. Since 1919, the Swedish-speaking community in Finland had systematically emphasised the value of developing closer relations between Finland and Sweden, but this had found little favour among a wider section of political opinion at the time of the tension over the Åland Islands, or later, following the swing towards developing ties with the border states.[149] Voices

147. Paasivirta 1968, p. 82.
148. Kalela 1971A, p. 238.
149. Wrede 1923 II, pp. 260—4.

arguing for a more active policy towards Sweden had nevertheless been raised within the Social Democratic Party, amongst them that of the party leader, Väinö Tanner. The latter had underlined his view at the conference of Baltic social democratic parties held in Riga in September 1921 that Finland was not a purely Baltic country in the same sense as the Baltic republics. The party leadership saw links with the Baltic countries as unlikely in the long term to serve the interests of expanding Finland's contacts abroad. Tanner's next move in this effort to focus Finnish interest on the Scandinavian countries came in an interview he gave to the Swedish paper *Arbetet* in May 1922 designed to persuade the Swedish Social Democrats to put their political weight behind a closer relationship. Tanner argued that closer ties would bring benefits to both countries on the basis of their shared interests, and strengthen the neutral cause in Scandinavia. He was careful to make plain, however, that he was not proposing any type of formal alliance.[150] Tanner's position was later reinforced by J. W. Keto, who argued that closer links with Scandinavia would provide a secure alternative to the more dangerous border states policy.[151]

Within conservative opinion, there were still those, chiefly associated with the activist tradition, who continued, even after the failure of Holsti's earlier policy initiative, to advocate some form of military alliance between the border states as the best way forward for Finnish foreign policy. Others were more favourable to developing ties with the Scandinavian countries. Some suggested that a defensive alliance along the lines of the rejected Warsaw agreement with Sweden might be a realistic option.[152] A further variation combining these two major threads was represented by the proposal put forward by E. N. Setälä in June 1922 for closer links in the foreign policy field between the Scandinavian countries, Finland and Estonia.[153]

The bulk of Swedish opinion proved lukewarm at best to any suggestion of military ties with Finland. This was forcibly brought home to those Finnish politicians advocating some form of joint Finnish-Swedish security arrangement by the reaction in Sweden

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150. Bruno Kalnins 29.3.1973; *Arbetet* 10.5.1922.
151. SS 16.3., 21.7.1923; Kalela 1971, p. 143.
152. Kalela 1971, pp. 155, 166, 228.
153. *Iltalehti* 26.5., 19.6.1922.

in the autumn of 1923 to the idea of a defensive alliance between Sweden and Finland put forward by the Swedish Foreign Minister, Carl Hedenstierna. The outright rejection of the latter's proposal by all the major political parties reflected the continuing strength of support for Sweden's established policy of neutrality.[154] Hedenstierna, in fact, was forced to resign over the issue, and the whole sequence of events served to show that closer links between the two countries would have to be restricted to non-security questions.

Following the resolution of the Åland dispute and the dissipation of the worst aspects of the tension that it had generated in Swedish-Finnish relations, the way was open for a stabilisation and normalisation of relations between the two countries. Movements in this direction continued to be hampered, however, by the residue of mutually hostile attitudes which remained on both Swedish and Finnish sides, inherited from the time of the Finnish Civil War or linked to the continuing language conflict between the Finnish and Swedish-speaking communities in Finland. Finland was, all the same, able to move somewhat closer towards more direct membership of the Scandinavian community in a number of fields, becoming a member of the Norden organisation in 1924, admittedly somewhat later than the other members, and a member of the Scandinavian parliamentary union.[155] Resistance towards any closer ties with Sweden was nevertheless evident within the very highest echelons of the political hierarchy in Finland, the result both of the continuing knock-on effect of earlier Swedish policy towards the Åland Islands, coupled with a more general cautious attitude towards the whole question of the development of bilateral relations. Ståhlberg's reluctance to visit Sweden was particularly symbolic of this, as was his conviction that a number of influential figures in Stockholm continued to find it, as he put it, 'difficult to accept Finland as a state on an equal footing with Sweden'.[156]

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154. Lönnroth 1959, pp. 66—8; Tingsten 1964, pp. 155—9; Paasivirta 1968, p. 83.
155. Norden — Förening för nordisk samarbete 1924—1934, pp. 10.13. Also see Yrjö Hirn's letter of 19.5.1923 to Werner Söderhjelm (Söderhjelm collection).
156. See Ståhlberg's letters of 4.11.1921, 20.10.1922 and 12.5.1923 to Söderhjelm (Söderhjelm collection). Also, the memorandum sent to Stockholm on the issue by the Swedish envoy in Helsinki (UD HP1Af).

Following Ståhlberg's replacement by Relander as President, official attitudes in Finland somewhat softened, with reciprocal state visits being arranged in the summer of 1925. While official relations between the two countries did improve and more effort was made to forget old arguments, no real progress was made on developing closer bilateral relations at a more fundamental level. Although the value of friendly relations with Sweden had begun to be recognised by an increasingly wider section of opinion in Finland, there was still a degree of resistance to setting the seal too firmly on a policy of closer ties when no one seemed sure of what benefit such a policy might bring, in either the short or long term.

Some interest also remained within a small section of Finnish opinion, mainly within circles close to the armed forces, in the possibility of a bilateral defence alliance between Sweden and Finland. This was counter-balanced to some extent by the critical attitude towards Sweden common in conservative circles, fuelled by what was seen as Sweden's continuing interference in the language issue in Finland and a number of other issues. Many of those on the Right came to see Sweden, particularly after the significant reduction in the Swedish defence budget passed in 1925, as an increasingly weak and ineffectual political force.[157]

With his more flexible approach to foreign policy issues, Relander represented quite a contrast to the somewhat slow-moving, ponderous style of his predecessor Ståhlberg. Relander's state visits to Sweden and the other Scandinavian countries and the Baltic republics represented a new style of political initiative and a raising of the country's international profile. The continuing caution evident in Finnish policy towards the Soviet Union, while contrasting to the gradual opening-up taking place towards Scandinavia, was in line with that typically favoured by much of Western Europe at the time.

Finland's early years of membership of the League of Nations, apart from the temporary prominence achieved during the time of the Åland Islands dispute, were typified by a relatively low-key approach to international issues. Domestic support for Finland's activity within the League was restricted, with few exceptions, to the centre parties and the Social Democrats. The latter were

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157. US 3.10.1925; *Iltalehti* 13.10.1925.

particularly encouraged by the discussions in the League's General Assembly of the Geneva protocol proposal, covering the institution of a system of international mediation and arbitration, which took place in the autumn of 1924, and its finally approval the same October. It was precisely this type of international cooperation which had been hoped for in these circles and it was seen as potentially opening up the way for more positive developments in the international field.[158] The Right, in contrast, remained sceptical of the practical value to a small country of the security guarantees offered by the League. The League itself was often seen in these quarters as tending to favour the interests of the major West European powers at the expense of the smaller states in the region.[159] Following the stabilisation of relations between the Western powers and Germany which took place with the resolution of the reparations dispute and the signing of the Locarno agreements and Germany's acceptance as a member of the League of Nations, opinion on the Right, however, swung more definitely behind Finland's official policy stance towards the organisation. This extended even to the hard core of conservative opinion traditionally associated with pro-German attitudes.[160]

The Finnish decision to accept the country's nomination as a member of the League's Council in the autumn of 1927, following Sweden's step-down after a three-year term of membership, was a clear indication of the more favourable overall attitude towards the organisation which had emerged in Finland, and of the increased level of confidence in the country's standing in the international arena. The adoption of a more active role in the League also reflected Finland's general desire to avoid becoming politically isolated, even at a time when no direct crises threatened. The major political leaders of the time generally appear to have had substantial faith, in line with many Western political figures, in the League and its potential to change the face of international relations and to maintain peace and the international order in Europe. Finland's own proposal on financial aid to guarantee economic assistance to member states subject to attack, while

158. HS 13.9., 8.10.1924; SS 14.7., 31.7., 2.8., 27.8.1924.
159. US 19.2., 22.9.1925; *Iltalehti* 5.9., 29.9.1925; *Suunta* 13.9.1924.
160. US 19.8., 29.8., 31.12.1924, 9.9.1926; *Iltalehti* 15.10.1925; Hbl 6.9.1926.

generating a lot of discussion, failed to result in any concrete policy on the subject.[161] The seal was set on Finland's more active role in the League's activities when the then Foreign Minister, Hjalmar Procopé, was appointed the chairman of the organisation's General Assembly for the autumn session in 1928.

On the question of Finnish-Soviet relations, Finnish policy-makers, despite their continued suspicion over the Soviet Union's long-term political aims both in relation to Finland and the wider world, strove towards achieving a consistent, if low-key approach aimed at stabilising ties. Particular attention was reserved for security issues, which were seen as requiring Finland to maintain a clear distance from the Soviet Union. In this, as in other issues, there was a desire to follow the general policy approach adopted by the majority of Western states. In its response to a Soviet proposal for discussions on a bilateral non-aggression treaty made in the spring of 1926, the Finnish government was careful to avoid committing itself to anything which could possibly weaken the security guarantees linked to Finland's membership of the League of Nations, or otherwise serve to isolate the country from its contacts with the West.[162] Joint discussions on a possible treaty did not get far, with little common ground being found on the question of agreed forms of mediation in the event of a sudden upswing in Finnish-Soviet tension. The Finnish side was particularly sensitive to any hint of an arrangement which could be interpreted as subordinating Finnish interests to Soviet ones, which it was felt a non-aggression treaty with the Soviet Union, however carefully worded, was likely in effect to mean. Great power influence, such as that wielded by Britain for example, appeared much less harmless from the Finnish perspective, as it was considered more easily parried, while that exercised by the Soviet Union consistently tended to be seen as potentially much more dangerous and likely to grow. The unwillingness of either side to compromise on the terms of a possible treaty finally led to the collapse of the talks.

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161. Broms 1962, pp. 152—3.
162. Korhonen I 1966, p. 144.

Those in charge of shaping Finnish foreign policy during the first decade of the country's independence, and particularly after 1922, strove to develop an approach which they liked to look on as independent. Their main aim was to avoid committing the country to any binding agreements or clear affiliations. The role desired for Finland, summed up by the Foreign Minister, Hjalmar Procopé, in the later 1920s, was one of a 'Western, Scandinavian and Baltic state'. Central to this Finnish policy was the assumption that Western respect for Finnish independence ultimately went deeper than Soviet respect. While the West was seen as less optimistic about the future fate of the three Baltic republics than that of Finland, Soviet attitudes, although placing Finland one rung above the Baltic countries, were assumed to include definite reservations about the independence of all four countries. This was reflected in the Finnish decision, alone among the border states, to adopt a delaying attitude to the Soviet Litvinov initiative, designed to offer a counter to the Western-inspired Kellogg pact on collective security and arbitration in international disputes. Although ratification of the latter had begun slowly, Finland hoped nevertheless to sign. Finnish leaders feared that the Litvinov agreement was aimed at establishing a Moscow-led and directed power bloc, likely to undermine Finland's desire to establish a closer Scandinavian linkage.[163] Policy-makers emphasised the need to safeguard the country's freedom of movement in foreign affairs issues. Unanimity on foreign policy objectives was far from being absolute, however, and critics tended to see in what was described as Finland's independent approach to foreign relations a toothless policy of no particular merit and one only reinforcing the country's 'splendid isolation'.[164]

6. Foreign trade relations

The problems and tensions typical of the post-war transitional period in Europe cast an inevitable shadow over Finnish foreign

163. Ibid., pp. 186—94.
164. Ibid., p. 187. Also Procopé's letters of 26.6., 31.12.1928 and 31.10.1929 to Ingman (Ingman collection III).

trade during the early years of the 1920s. Despite the relative success that had been achieved in establishing a steady flow of timber and paper exports to the West, significant uncertainty remained in many Finnish exporters' minds over future market prospects. Regaining the admittedly slender pre-war Finnish share of the Western market and expanding it to provide new, significantly more substantial export opportunities was seen as a make or break question for the overall development of the country's economy. Uncertainties continued to exist over the degree of future Finnish access to the once important Russian market, even after the ratification of the Tartu peace treaty. Memories of the two previous failures to restart trade with the East, following the collapse of expectations focused on the Ukrainian market during the summer of 1918 and of those which had been built on exploiting possible Western intervention during 1919, remained fresh in everyone's minds.

Finnish industry had initially assumed that the post-war reconstruction boom in Western Europe would create a significant demand for timber and timber-related products. Demand in fact, however, failed to match this projection, held back by the internal disorder and instability affecting the economies of the region. This saw a steady decline in prices for timber products from the latter half of 1920 onwards. Despite this weak market development, Finnish exports did not suffer as much as they might have done, thanks to the benefits brought by the continuing fall in the value of the Finnish mark on the international market typical of the late 1910s and early 1920s, and which contrasted with the strong performance of the Swedish crown, the currency of Finland's major Scandinavian competitor.[165] The development of Finland's overall trading relations with the West was, however, hindered to some extent by the persistence of doubts in a number of Western countries over the long-term permanence of Finland's independence. These suspicions over Finland's reliability as a trading partner, fuelled in part by the memory of the Civil War and in part by the continuing question mark hanging over Finland's relations with the Soviet Union, indirectly served to benefit Swedish export industries. Awareness of this lack of international confidence

165. Ahvenainen 1972, pp. 82—3.

served to reinforce in many Finnish industrialists' minds the need for a greater export promotion effort and for more adequate and efficient dissemination of information on Finnish affairs abroad, designed to create an image of Finland as a Scandinavian, rather than a border state. By aligning the country with the Scandinavian tradition, it was hoped to develop a picture of Finland as possessing a developed and diverse economy and as enjoying stable independence.[166]

The first major post-war slump in Finnish exports occurred in the early half of 1921. Its effect on the economy was heightened by a number of other additional factors, which together contributed to a temporary critical balance of trade problem. The decision by France shortly previously to significantly increase tariffs on imports of Finnish paper and timber, and similar moves by Britain to introduce protective tariff barriers on paper and timber imports, had served to seriously undermine market stability for Finland's major exports. This convinced the Finnish government of the need to aim for official trade agreements, capable of providing a stable framework for future commercial relations, with the country's major trading partners. The first of these agreements was made with France in 1921 and provided Finland with preferred nation status in tariff issues, which consolidated her position with regard to her competitors in the timber and paper sector and went towards removing much of the uncertainty which had previously hampered Finnish export efforts.[167] These balance of trade problems, which had only been further exacerbated by the freeing of imports into Finland the same spring, proved short-lived, however, and exports in the latter half of the year rose sharply, resulting in the virtual elimination of the first half's gaping deficit. The economic difficulties being experienced in a number of other countries nevertheless served to maintain a mood of caution in Finnish business and government circles with regard to this apparent improvement in Finnish prospects. 1922 saw the country's balance of trade show a clear surplus for the first time since independence, achieved partly as a result of a rise in timber

166. *Suomen Paperi- ja Puutavaralehti* 15.9.1919.
167. On the trade agreements with France and Spain, see *Kauppalehti* 9.4., 28.5., 30.6.1921; Hbl 16.7.1921, 11.12.1923; SvPr 26.1.1922.

and paper exports and partly thanks to the first signs of growth shown by the export of agricultural products, which had otherwise expanded slowly in the immediate post-war years.[168] This positive development in the trade balance encouraged renewed attempts to stabilise the value of the mark.

Despite the removal of the formal brake on Finland's traditional trade with Russia as a result of the Tartu peace, no great upswing in trade with the East proved forthcoming. While the paper and metal-working industries, both traditionally well-represented in trade with Russia, welcomed, if mutedly, the potential opening-up of the Russian market this offered, there was a good deal of suspicion, some of it verging on hostility in some cases, in other sectors of the business community towards the whole question of trading with the Soviet Union. The reasons behind this were partly political and partly the result of the terms of the Tartu agreement. The latter had resolved the problem of Finnish property remaining in the Soviet Union and Russian property remaining in Finland by declaring the two to be notionally equal and thus precluding, at least in theory, any compensation by either side for lost assets. The enthusiasm that existed within Finnish business for expanding Finnish-Soviet trade was also tempered by the problems affecting the Soviet economy in the wake of the disruptions caused by the revolution and the civil war, and which had seen Russian consumer demand and the level of Russian foreign trade fall dramatically, in the case of the latter to only some 1% of 1913 levels in 1920.[169]

Against this background of economic dislocation, many industrialists in Finland, like their colleagues in Sweden and Britain, which had both signed trade agreements with the Soviet Union, in 1920 and 1921 respectively, were sceptical about the overall potential of Western exporters to gain a foothold on the Soviet market, and uncertain about how the small market that might be accessible would be split between Western companies.[170] Developing trade with the new Soviet state also required adjusting to the centralised style of foreign trade administration which had

168. Halme 1955, p. 174.
169. Haataja (ed.) 1978, pp. 27—8.
170. *Kauppalehti* 6.4., 9.4., 11.4.1921.

been instituted in the post-revolutionary period. Following Sweden's lead in establishing, subsequent to the Soviet-Swedish trade agreement, a coordinating body representing the interests of the major exporting companies to handle trade between the two countries, a number of joint sales organisations covering heavy industry, paper producers and food exporters were set up in Finland at the beginning of 1921 to coordinate trade with the East.[171]

The visit of a Finnish trade delegation to the Soviet Union in the summer of 1921 resulted in a contract for Finnish producers to supply a small shipment of newsprint, which was generally welcomed in Finland as hopefully presaging larger future contracts. The discussions held between the two sides proved less fruitful, however, in producing contracts for other sectors of the Finnish economy, lending further support to those sections of opinion doubtful about the real economic value of the Tartu agreement.[172] Trade relations between the two countries received an early setback in November 1921, with the Soviet decision to break off trade with Finland as a result of the crisis over East Karelia. Trade was only restored the following spring, when a further shipment of newsprint was negotiated. Discussions on the signing of a general trade agreement between the two countries continued throughout 1922 and 1923, but without result. Trade between the two countries remained very modest, hampered by the Soviet Union's lack of purchasing power. Encouraged by the improvement in trade links with the West which developed as the decade wore on, however, less attention came to be paid in Finnish business circles to access to the Russian market than earlier.

Opinion within the business community on the general state of the country's foreign trade and overall economic development during the early years of independence varied, sometimes widely, but was often critical of the government's role in shaping the country's economy. A number of commentators of the time liked to argue that Finland's relative success in having established her place in the world was much more the result of the activities of the country's export industries than of official diplomacy.[173]

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171. *Mercator* 29.4.1921; T. v. Wright 1928, p. 29.
172. *Kauppalehti* 2.9.1921.
173. AU 25.2.1923.

Government policy also came in for attack by those critical of official monetary policies and their apparent inability to stabilise the country's monetary system, still only slowly recovering from the after-effects of the First World War. Particular criticism was directed at the inefficient planning practices, unrealistic desire for reform, and general political blustering, which was seen as typical of official handling of the economy. The Bank of Finland and its currency policies came in for regular criticism as part of this assault against the government's role. Events eventually led to the resignation of its director, Otto Stenroth, in 1923 and the appointment of Risto Ryti as his successor.[174] Among those who, in contrast, saw many of the difficulties and challenges facing the post-independent Finnish economy as ultimately resulting from the sudden shift in trade from East to West which had been forced on the country as a result of independence was J. K. Paasikivi, a prominent politician and a leading figure in banking circles. If Finland was to succeed in international competition and eliminate the gap existing between herself and her Scandinavian neighbours in terms of national income per head of population and levels of foreign trade, Paasikivi argued, the country would need to make a substantially more concerted effort to develop her industrial and agricultural resources.[175]

The mid-1920s saw the Finnish balance of trade again move into surplus, with the country's level of foreign trade exports and imports combined exceeding pre-war levels in volume terms.[176] Timber exports reached an all-time record in 1925, amounting to over a million standards, with paper exports also rising significantly. The overall share of timber and paper products, the country's major export-earners, amounted to some 85% of the country's total exports between 1924 and 1926, marking a clear increase over their share of the pre-war export market, which had amounted to 73% in 1913. The share of paper products also increased over the same period, from 18% in 1913 to 28% in the mid-20s. Finland continued to remain behind Sweden, however,

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174. *Mercator* 28.6.1921.
175. See Paasikivi's speech on 29.11.1921 to the Finnish Business Association, as reported in *Mercator* 2.12.1921.
176. Halme 1955, p. 174; *Mercator* 30.1.1925, 22.1.1926; Suomen Puunjalostusteollisuuden Keskusliiton toimintakertomus, 1924 and 1925 (SMKL).

in her level of exports of higher value-added wood-based products. Despite the rise in butter exports to stand at 132,000 tons in 1925, exceeding pre-war levels, the overall share of food exports as a proportion of total Finnish exports decreased by some seven percentage points between 1911 and 1926, from 19% to 12%. Heavy industry's share of the export cake, however, fell the most over the same period, from 7% in 1913 to a mere 1% in 1926.

Britain and Germany emerged as Finland's most important post-war trading partners. The pattern of Anglo-Finnish and Finnish-German trade nevertheless differed widely. While Finnish exports to Britain during the 1920s represented on average nearly 40% of the country's total exports, British exports to Finland amounted to less than 20% of Finland's total imports. In Germany's case, the situation was reversed, with Finnish-German trade running in Germany's favour, with Germany's share of Finnish imports at over 30% and Finnish exports to Germany taking under 20% of the total Finnish export effort. The dominance of Britain and Germany in Finnish foreign trade during the mid-1920s was emphasised by the virtual disappearance of Finland's once extensive trade with Russia. For all its scale, the disruption and readjustment that this loss caused for Finnish foreign trade and the economy as a whole during the early years of independence nevertheless proved only temporary, and by the middle of the decade the Finnish economy had achieved relative stability. Heavy industry and textiles bore the brunt of these changed market conditions. Both had previously been particularly prominent in Finnish-Russian trade and now had to come to terms with a greatly reduced role in Finnish exports and slim-down their operations in line with the requirements of the domestic market.

The dominance of Germany and Britain in Finnish foreign trade also inevitably saw much of the rest of Europe, such as Southern and Eastern Europe, including the Danube basin, come to play only a minimal part in Finnish trade. The first major extension of Finnish trade relations outside Europe took place in North America. Exports of timber and paper products to the United States got under way in 1919. Trade links were also opened up to a smaller extent during the 1920s with South America, with Argentina and Brazil emerging as the country's main trading partners in the region. Shipping and trading links were also extended to other parts of the southern hemisphere, although

Finland continued to lag well behind the more established trade links enjoyed by her Scandinavian competitors, Sweden and Norway.[177]

The importance, in theory at least, of active cooperation between the Foreign Ministry and its diplomats abroad and export industries in promoting foreign trade had not been lost on the business community or government. This had been reflected early on in the setting-up in 1919 of a permanent joint trade agreement committee, made up of ministry and industry representatives, responsible for preparing the groundwork for future bilateral trade discussions with Finland's trading partners. Leading industrialists consistently stressed the importance of developing a diplomatic corps capable of adequately handling and advancing the country's commercial interests. They also proposed that, in appointing envoys and consulate officials, the government should take account of the views and opinions of the business community itself.[178] Criticism was quickly forthcoming from industrialists and business figures and the business journal *Mercator* of what was seen as the reluctance on the part of the Foreign Ministry to recruit candidates with a commercial or industrial background to diplomatic appointments, and the tendency to select academics in their stead.[179]

The deepening dissatisfaction felt within the business community towards government policy in this field, together with the general recognition of the country's lack of experience in foreign affairs, contributed to the setting-up of a special committee under L. Åström and including a number of leading businessmen in the spring of 1921. The committee's brief was to study the problems surrounding the country's diplomatic representation abroad and the question of securing Finnish commercial interests overseas, and to provide suggestions for improving relations between government and industry.[180] The committee's report contained a number of proposals aimed at developing the number of posts for specialised commercial attachés within the diplomatic service and

177. *Mercator* 16.12.1927.
178. *Kauppalehti* 18.3.1921.
179. *Mercator* 24.11.1919.
180. *Kauppalehti* 2.4.1921; *Mercator* 8.4.1921.

for coordinating the dissemination of information on commercial issues, and ensuring that the interests of the country's export industries were more efficiently served by the diplomatic corps. Implementation of these findings, however, was hampered by the general reluctance of Parliament to agree to providing the necessary extra funds to develop the diplomatic service once its main structure had been established. Some changes aimed at improving efficiency were nevertheless made in reorganising administration within the Foreign Ministry, with a separate commercial department and information office being set up within the ministry in 1923.[181]

Discussion on the country's commercial representation abroad and the best way of organising it to serve both industrial and national interests nevertheless continued, both in business circles close to the problem and, to a lesser extent, in the press. A particular problem area singled out for criticism was the inadequacy and lack of coordination of government and industrial efforts aimed at disseminating information about Finland abroad, generally advancing Finnish commercial interests and building up knowledge of foreign markets. A number of commentators pointed to the experience of Sweden and Norway, where the need for some form of single centralised coordinating body charged with looking after commercial interests abroad to avoid duplication of effort and a waste of scarce personnel and financial resources had already been realised.[182] A significant factor complicating any solution to the problem, however, lay in the resistance of the timber and paper industries to subordinate their sales efforts to any joint body and their preference for maintaining their independent approach.

Some minor progress was made on the problem from 1924 onwards on the basis of increased funds granted by Parliament and the introduction of separate budget appropriations for supporting Finnish exports abroad. A number of commercial and agricultural attachés were appointed to Finnish legations abroad.[183] While indicating the government's awareness of the problem, these moves brought little significant practical progress, however.

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181. Åströmin komitean mietintö (UM 58 E I); Paasivirta 1968, pp. 207—8.
182. *Mercator* 28.6.1924.
183. Paasivirta 1968, p. 208.

Cooperation between government and industry was also hampered during the mid-1920s by the low level and coolness of contacts which existed between the Foreign Ministry and leading managers in the timber and paper industries. Finnish diplomats abroad were often seen by many leading figures in the industry, such as Axel Solitander, as simply unequal to the task of advancing Finnish commercial interests and helping Finnish industry gain new markets or consolidate established ones, because of their lack of interest and experience in commercial matters and over-concentration on purely political and military issues. The appointment of Hjalmar Procopé, known for his interest in commercial questions, as Foreign Minister in 1927 served to improve relations between the ministry and industry, and inspired the latter to produce a number of concrete proposals for improvements in the handling of commercial affairs by the government and the country's diplomats.[184]

7. Post-war cultural relations

The pressure on Finland as a newly independent state to assert her national and cultural identity and establish a distinct national profile fuelled a strong, introspectively nationalist atmosphere during the early post-independence years and subsequently. This had the effect of reducing interest in international cultural developments and forging and maintaining international contacts. In its most extreme forms, it promoted a conscious avoidance of anything considered modern and international and, by extension, likely to undermine national self-identity and Finnish culture. Attention tended to be turned inwards at things Finnish, rather than outwards towards developments in the wider European arena. This attitude, with its exaggerated emphasis on what were conceived of as purely and quintessentially Finnish values, reflected both a general cultural insecurity and the continued underlying sense of inferiority felt towards the past cultural dominance of Sweden and Finland's own Swedish-language tradition.

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184. Ibid., pp. 209—212.

There were some variations in emphasis within this conservative mainstream, however. While agrarianist-inspired nationalists concentrated full-square on domestic values, many conservatives preferred to concentrate on highlighting Finland's role as a bastion and outpost of the West against the East. In this, they drew on the anti-Russian sentiment and sense of ethnic superiority which had grown up, particularly among the Swedish-speaking intelligentsia, during the nineteenth century, and which was now adapted to the cause of anti-Bolshevism. More expansionist-minded nationalists focused on Finland's Finno-Ugrian cultural background.

The Civil War of 1918 had left Finnish society divided down the middle into two hostile opposing camps and this division was closely reflected in the arts, and indirectly permeated into the country's cultural contacts abroad. This schism was particularly forcefully felt in the literature that appeared during the early years of independence which, instead of fulfilling the role of a powerful force underpinning national identity, as was typical in many new nation-states, often served in the Finnish case to perpetuate and aggravate social tensions and cleavages.

Among those writers to emerge most uncompromisingly committed to celebrating the victory of conservative national values represented by the White army's triumph were V. A. Koskenniemi and Maila Talvio. Koskenniemi, in his short verse study 'Nuori Anssi' (Young Anssi), which appeared in the immediate wake of the conflict, for example, chose to virtually completely ignore its social aspects, preferring instead, in his assertion of the justice of the White cause, to focus on the Reds as having betrayed their country and as having been in virtual league with the Russians. A similar interpretation was followed by Maila Talvio in her novel 'Kurjet' (1919: The Cranes), in which the struggle was portrayed as a trial of strength between good and evil, with the losers dismissed as little better than worthless. Both Koskenniemi and Talvio were keen to describe the Civil War as having been a battle against Bolshevism on behalf of Western culture. With such excellent conservative credentials and given the overall dominance of nationalist sentiment which extended throughout much of the following decades, it was no surprise that Koskenniemi went on to become an important cultural figure in the inter-war period, developing close contacts with the conservative political hierarchy. A similar approving attitude

towards the White role in the Civil War to that found in the work of writers such as Koskenniemi and Talvio was also prominent among that of many authors writing in Swedish, Bertel Gripenberg being among the most enthusiastic of these.

In contrast to the extremes of the views espoused by the likes of Koskenniemi and Talvio, a number of other writers, such as F. E. Sillanpää, Joel Lehtonen, Juhani Aho and Volter Kilpi adopted a calmer, more contemplative approach to the events of 1918 in their attempt to go deeper beneath the surface of events and reassess national values in the post-independence period. In his novel 'Hurskas kurjuus' (1919: Meek Heritage), Sillanpää, although treating the Civil War theme only indirectly through the vicissitudes affecting his main character, attempted to provide a consciously more even-handed view of the conflict than that found among his more conservative colleagues, and one sympathetic to the defeated and critical of the brutality that had marred some of White activities. Lehtonen concentrated on the human consequences of a conflict which had seen fellow countrymen set against each other, while Aho focused on the extremes of fear, uncertainty and exultation which had been generated by the struggle within liberal opinion. Eino Leino too, despite his various shifts of sympathies, argued for the need for national reconciliation.[185] Within Swedish-language literature, it was left to figures such as Jarl Hemmer and Elmer Diktonius to highlight the more tragic aspects of the events surrounding the conflict.[186]

Domestic tensions surrounding attitudes towards the Civil War and such things as the language conflict came, by virtue of their very intensity, to play a prominent part in shaping the nature of Finland's international cultural relations, both in determining the people selected to represent Finnish culture abroad and in determining the cultural influences from abroad that gained a foothold within Finland itself. Conservatism proved able, not only to retain its strong hold on the main core of Finnish cultural life, but also to reinforce its position. The conservative figures which came to dominate intellectual opinion and the arts in general, however,

185. Leino IV 1962, pp. 170, 286.
186. Laitinen V 1965, pp. 345—8; Warburton 1951, pp. 66—9, 182, 237.

ultimately shared little in common, in terms of their social ideas, with those dominant within the major political parties.

For all the major changes which had been brought about by the First World War and its aftermath, the strong latent weight of the country's essentially conservative cultural traditions prevented any comparable thorough-going change in the arts and cultural life. Symbolically indicative of this was the continuing position of German as the major foreign language taught in secondary schools. Its dominance was even indirectly reinforced following the virtual elimination of Russian from foreign language teaching. English, despite its association with the victorious Allies, continued to be little taught, being typically available only as an optional language in the higher grades.

The labour movement, largely taken up in the period following 1918 with domestic issues and forced to concentrate the bulk of its efforts on its struggle to break out of its political limbo, was in no real position to extend its activities to embrace the arts, least of all to try and influence the country's international cultural contacts. The movement's own contacts were similarly limited throughout much of this period. An exception to this was the Swedish-speaking socialist federation, Finlands Svenska Arbetarförbund, which maintained relatively close, if low-key contacts in the arts field with Scandinavia, particularly Sweden.

Independent organisations and individuals dominated the management and direction of cultural relations during the early years of independence, with the government and government-sponsored agencies playing very much a minor role. The Ministry of Education lacked any staff capable of handling international cultural relations and had to rely on personnel from its press department to look after cultural affairs and other forms of international exchange. Much of the real work involved in disseminating information about Finnish literary and artistic developments, and expanding Finnish familiarity with developments abroad, was left up to the various established associations and societies operating in the cultural and arts field. The Finnish Literature Society (Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura) developed links and publication exchange ties with Estonia and Hungary and with a number of departments involved in Finno-Ugrian studies in European universities. The equivalent body devoted to Finland-Swedish literature, Svenska Litteratursällskapet, developed similar ties

with the Scandinavian countries.[187] The Union of Finnish Writers (Suomen Kirjailijaliitto) and its Swedish-language sister organisation, Finlands Svenska Författarförening, founded in 1919, also developed their own links abroad.

Academic links abroad were largely in the hands of national scientific and academic associations, which maintained contact with similar organisations abroad through their periodicals or serial publications. The country's universities lacked any adequate administrative infrastructure to deal with maintaining and developing international links. This lack of administrative back-up characteristic of the Finnish academic world during the 1920s also often meant that international contacts in many research fields became concentrated in the hands of a few prominent individual scholars, such as the linguist E. N. Setälä, the folklorist Kaarle Krohn, and the anthropologist Edvard Westermarck. This naturally gave these figures a powerful measure of influence in determining the level and focus of academic contacts abroad. Within Finland itself, they were often in a position to virtually dictate the nature of research in their fields. This arrangement had the disadvantage that, in the event of death or illness, links could temporarily break down altogether.

Prior to the First World War, Finnish cultural ties abroad had been largely focused on Sweden, Germany, France, Estonia, and to a lesser extent Russia. The limited knowledge of foreign languages typical of the period, together with the small number of languages known, had restricted the nature of these contacts. The linguistic isolation imposed on the Finnish-speaking majority, Finnish lacking any closely-related cousins among the major European languages, had only reinforced this fact. Linguistic isolation had been much less of a problem for the country's Swedish-speaking minority which, sharing a common language with Sweden, had easy access to virtually the whole of the Scandinavian cultural area. Something of a similar pattern of links, although obviously modified by the pressures and requirements brought by

187. See the general correspondence of the Finnish Literature Society from 1919 onwards, and the minutes of the meetings of its Swedish-language sister organisation, Svenska Litteratursällskapet.

independence, emerged in the post-1918 period. Linguistic and ethnic links encouraged ties with Estonia and Hungary, historical traditions, ties with the Scandinavian countries, and established academic and cultural links, continuing ties with Germany. Contacts with France and Britain occupied a less important position.

The strong sense of a common cultural inheritance with Estonia and Hungary served to accelerate development of cultural ties with these countries. The fact that, what common cultural inheritance there was, was largely based on purely linguistic associations, and in the case of Hungary really quite distant and slim ties, did not dissuade those most committed to developing Finnish-Estonian and Finnish-Hungarian contacts. This enthusiasm for developing ties with what were seen as the country's cultural cousins was also influenced by the desire of a large proportion of nationalist opinion among the student community and the young academically-educated to redraw the country's relations with Sweden and eliminate the remaining cultural bias towards Sweden existing within Finland.

The extent of this enthusiasm was reflected in the decision taken in 1919 by a number of young Finnish academics, including the linguist Lauri Kettunen and the archeologist A. M. Tallgren, to take up professorships at the University of Tartu in Estonia. This was welcomed by the Estonian authorities as a temporary stopgap measure to prevent a return to the German-dominated traditions which had prevailed during the nineteenth century. Such an arrangement was seen as providing Estonia with a breathing-space to allow the training of a new generation of Estonian academics capable of transforming the university into a solely Estonian institute of higher education.[188] Estonia's geographical proximity to Finland, together with the relative linguistic similarity between Estonian and Finnish, made Estonia especially attractive as a country with which to establish closer cultural and other ties. Initial post-independence cultural contacts between the two countries were largely biased towards the academic world, with linguistics and folklore studies in particular taking a prominent

188. Kettunen 1948, pp. 67—75, 84—93.

part.[189] Links nevertheless gradually assumed a wider and more organised nature as time went on, with regular Finnish participation in the Estonian national song and choir festivals beginning in 1922 and permanent ties later being established between both countries' student organisations.[190]

Links between Finland and Hungary did not achieve the same relatively wide extent as those with Estonia, for the simple reason of the geographical distance separating the two countries. The very different nature of the two languages in their modern forms also provided its own difficulties. A modest level of contact was nevertheless established during the 1920s, focused mainly on academic exchanges and visits, and the activities of the more nationalist elements within Finnish society who particularly sympathised with the fate of post-Trianon Hungary.[191] The exchange visits organised between Finnish and Hungarian members of parliament in the 1920s, sponsored by nationalist groups in both countries, caused some political argument in Finland and resulted in socialist and Swedish-speaking politicians refusing to meet members of the Hungarian National Assembly when they visited Helsinki in 1925. The Left was particularly critical of the visit, condemning the authoritarian conservative Horthy government and the restrictions it had imposed on the Hungarian labour movement. The proposal for a return visit by members of the Finnish Parliament in 1928 provoked a similar division of opinion.[192] Less furore was generated by the first congress of Finno-Ugrian scholars held in Helsinki in 1921, which was followed by similar conferences in Tallinn in 1924 and Budapest in 1928. In addition to their more immediate aim of providing academics working in the same field with a chance to meet their opposite numbers, these conferences also fostered wider cultural contacts between the participating countries. Typical of this was the wide range of subjects, embracing educational, economic, literary and artistic topics, in addition to

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189. Ibid., pp. 107—24, 146—56; M Haavio 1972, pp. 411—67, 597—602.
190. On the Estonian song festivals, see Särkkä 1973, pp. 7—10; US 8.7.1928. For student contacts, see Klinge IV 1968, pp. 105—6; J. Haavio 1973, pp. 215—7; *Iltalehti* 9.10.1925; *Suomen Heimo* 30.9.1926, 15.4.1928, 15.4.1929.
191. US 5.7.1928.
192. HS 31.3.1928; US 31.3.1928.

Finno-Ugrian related subjects, introduced at the Budapest meeting.[193]

Closer contacts with Hungary and Estonia were regularly justified by their advocates as central to maintaining and fostering the shared historical inheritance seen as binding all three countries together in a single cultural family. This notion of a common inheritance, ultimately based on the distant common proto-language assumed to have preceded the emergence of Finnish, Estonian and Hungarian as separate independent lan-guages, was, however, largely a romantic one, lacking a sound base in contemporary culture. Independence had provided scholars working in Finno-Ugrian linguistics and related fields in Finland with new inspiration and enthusiasm in developing their ideas. It had at the same time, however, also deprived them of their links with the various scattered minority nationalities belonging to the Finno-Ugrian family spread across northern Russia, which had been the subject of extensive field trip visits during the nineteenth century, leaving them with access, to all intents and purposes, only to Estonia and Hungary.

Cultural contacts were also maintained between Finland and the border states. These were consolidated when student organisations in Finland and the three Baltic republics established a coordinating body, given the acronym SELL after the first initials of the four countries involved, at a joint meeting held in Tartu in 1923, to foster closer links across a broad spectrum of activities.[194] Participation in SELL served to compensate Finnish-speaking students for their relative lack of ties with Swedish and other Scandinavian student organisations. Compared to direct contacts with Estonia and Hungary which took place under the Finno-Ugrian umbrella, however, activities within SELL, which used German as its lingua franca, never came to hold the same attraction. Academic contact between Finland and the more southerly Baltic states was also similarly less active, maintained

193. *Ylioppilaslehti* 5.2., 10.4.1921; US 19.6.1924; *Ilkka* 1.7., 3.7.1924; US 12.6.1928.

194. See the speeches of Y. O. Ruuth and Väinö Auer at the 'Konferenz der Studentenschaften Finnlands, Estlands, Lettlands und Litauens am 10—11.4.1923 in Tartu' (SELL collection/VA). Also *Ylioppilaslehti* 21.4.1923, 12.3.1927; *Suomen Heimo* 26.10.1925.

mainly through the efforts of individual scholars such as the folklorist A. R. Niemi, who had wide contacts in Latvia and Lithuania, and the philologist J. J. Mikkola, who had close contacts with Poland.

Cultural contacts between Finland and Sweden were very much divided between those sponsored at a national level and those created and maintained by the country's Swedish-speaking minority. Cultural links between the two countries had a long history, but since the mid-nineteenth century they had been increasingly overshadowed as a result of the tensions generated by the language struggle within Finland. Ties with mainland Sweden had always been valued by the Swedish-speaking population in Finland and they gained further significance in the community's eyes during the 1920s when the increasing fierceness of the internal struggle between the Finnish-speaking majority, keen to consolidate its new-found dominance, and the Swedish-speaking minority, made the latter ever more sensitive to what appeared to be its threatened position. Links with Sweden offered the Swedish-speaking population an escape valve for their frustrations and fears. Many of the leading figures in the Swedish-speaking community were also sensitive to the danger they saw posed by post-revolutionary Soviet Russia and Finland's own socialists. Against this background, contacts with Sweden were seen as helping to bind Finland more firmly to the rest of Scandinavia and to Scandinavian constitutional and political values, and the wider Western cultural inheritance. This tendency among Swedish-speaking observers in Finland to identify Sweden, and by extension the rest of Scandinavia, with traditional values, being as it was very much a product of their reaction to Finland's own problems, did not entirely match the modern reality of Sweden. Far from being the static type of society it had been for much of the nineteenth century, Sweden was in fact going through a period of significant and rapid social change, which was creating a country very different from that which persisted in the minds of conservative Swedish-speaking Finland.

While seeing nothing wrong in their own eagerness to actively develop and foster cultural links with Sweden, some figures in the Swedish-speaking intelligentsia were critical of attempts by their Finnish-speaking colleagues to develop contacts with Estonia,

Hungary and the Baltic countries, which were often described as representing a less advanced level of Western civilization than the Nordic area.[195]

The fact of independence and the ending of centuries of foreign rule in Finland nevertheless raised the question for the Swedish-speaking minority of whether it too would not be wise to stress the independence of its cultural inheritance, not only from the dominant Finnish tradition, but also from that of mainland Sweden. This revived debate on Freudenthal's hypothesis put forward in the previous century that the Swedish-speaking population in Finland lacked an independent identity and was little more than the eastern branch of a single Swedish people. Freudenthal's ideas found little real favour, however, in the Finland of the 1920s, with the exception of a few figures like Hugo Ekhammar, for whom the sense of belonging to a single united Swedish family was especially close. They were unable to seriously undermine the majority view held among Finland's Swedish-speakers that, by virtue of their separate history and in spite of their having benefited from close contacts with mainland Sweden, they represented an independent and dynamic community in their own right.[196]

Above and beyond the special interests of the Swedish-speaking minority, a need was felt in a number of other sectors of society to develop contacts with Sweden which, although not much larger in population than Finland, had proved singularly more accessible to general European influences and continued to serve as a result as a source of ideas, if not direct inspiration, for developments in Finland. A pattern of regular contacts and communication between the Scandinavian countries and Finland did in fact emerge in a number of fields. This was reinforced by the various conferences which began to be organised in a number of academic fields from the early 1920s onwards, and which offered Finnish scholars a good opportunity to gain access to wider international developments. In some areas, such as historical research, contacts with Sweden were often a virtual necessity as the Swedish National

195. Hbl 6.7.1922; SvPr 20.1.1922; *Västra Nyland* 25.4.1922; *Borgåbladet* 6.5.1922; *Det Nya Sverige* 1920, p. 194.
196. H. Ekhammer 1922, pp. 1—2.

Archive in Stockholm contained the bulk of documentary material relating to the period of Swedish rule in Finland.

Academic publications devoted to the natural sciences and medicine often made use of one of the major European languages, mainly German at this stage, and were as a result relatively easy to disseminate to the wider world, Scandinavia included. The virtually exclusive use of Finnish in publications in the humanities and social sciences, however, radically restricted the size of their possible audience. Swedish-speaking academics in the latter fields enjoyed a significant in-built advantage over their Finnish-speaking colleagues through writing in what was the lingua franca of the whole of Scandinavia, and were often instrumental in communicating the fruits of Finnish research to the wider Scandinavian audience unable, because of the language barrier, to read much of it at first hand. Study abroad by Finnish academics was relatively rare in the 1920s, with few scholarships available and travel hampered by the long distances involved to the major European university centres. The general scarcity of scholarship funds and Finland's geographically-isolated position also adversely affected the ability of those in the arts to travel abroad.[197]

Various attempts were made by the Finnish authorities to encourage cultural exchange and improve the overall level of cultural contacts between Finland and Sweden during the mid-1920s. The response they received from their Swedish counterparts was largely sympathetic. The potential value of the arts in developing bilateral relations, particularly by virtue of their relative neutrality in relation to political issues, was appreciated at a time when there was a strong desire in both Finland and Sweden to reduce the tension and mutual hostility, much of it dating from the dispute over the Åland Islands, which still coloured relations between the two countries. A key part in these moves was played by the Finnish envoy in Stockholm, Werner Söderhjelm, who prior to becoming a diplomat had himself been a prominent figure in the Finnish academic world and was well known for his moderate views on the vexed language question. As part of his general efforts to improve the Swedish press' coverage of literature and the

197. HS 29.5.1919; *Nya Argus* 16.6.1919.

arts in Finland and extend it to embrace material produced by the Finnish-speaking community, Söderhjelm organised a joint journalists' seminar in Stockholm in 1924.[198] This coincided with the holding of the second Scandinavian writers' congress in the Swedish capital, which was attended by some of Finland's leading writers from both linguistic communities, and was reported widely in both the Finnish and Swedish press.[199]

The newly-founded Swedish-language university in Turku, Åbo Akademi, played an important part during the 1920s in shaping links between Finland's Swedish-speaking minority and mainland Sweden. Its position as the only Swedish-language university outside Sweden was particularly emphasised by its supporters and it benefited from a steady flow of bequests from Sweden, as well as a substantial flow of prominent Swedish academics coming as visiting lecturers.[200] Swedish-speaking academics in a wide variety of fields in Finland enjoyed good links with their colleagues in Sweden, sharing as they did many areas of interest in common. Typical of this was the Swedish-language congress devoted to philological and historical research on Scandinavian topics organised in Helsinki during the summer of 1922, which attracted a large number of participants from both countries.[201] This commonality of interest and approach in the Swedish-speaking academic world was also evident in the attitudes of Swedish-speaking literary scholars in Finland and their colleagues in Sweden proper to Finland's major Swedish-language poets of the nineteenth century, Runeberg and Topelius. Both tended to be considered almost as much Swedish as Finnish, and were the subject of much debate in visiting lectures and correspondence between the two academic communities.[202]

That attitudes within the two communities towards shared

198. See Söderhjelm's letters of 8.6. and 19.6.1924 to Procopé (Procopé collection) and his letter of 20.11.1923 to Hugo Suolahti (Hugo Suolahti collection. Also Söderhjelm: Anteckningar 17.6., 12.12.1925 (Söderhjelm collection).
199. US 18.6., 6.7., 13.7.1924. See also Koskenniemi's letter of 12.6.1924 and Sillanpää's of 10.4.1926 to Söderhjelm (Söderhjelm collection).
200. Nordström 1968, pp. 145—6.
201. See the commentary on 'Svenska filolog- och historikermöte i Helsingfors den 17—19 augusti 1922' in SSLF CLXVII/FU 36.
202. See the correspondence between Gunnar Castrén and Prof. Martin Lamm during the 1920s (Gunnar Castrén collection).

cultural traditions were not completely without their problems, however, was shown by the difficulties which had developed within the Swedish-language theatre world in Finland. The latter had been dominated during the war years by a dispute over the need of the Swedish Theatre in Helsinki to maintain a separate part of its activities devoted to mainland Swedish productions. This had only been resolved in December 1918 with the appointment of Nicken Rönngren as the theatre's new director and the decision to concentrate artistic energies on home-bred productions and theatrical traditions and the work of Finland-Swedish authors.[203] This change caused major upheavals, both in the workings of the theatre itself and further afield. Following the Helsinki example, the Swedish theatre in Turku also began productions of Finland-Swedish drama. The Swedish theatre in Vaasa, in contrast, decided to retain its mainland Swedish actors.[204]

Swedish-speaking student circles in Finland had actively worked towards establishing wider contacts with their Swedish counterparts since the early months of independence. The Scandinavian student congress held in Loviisa, near Helsinki, in August 1922 marked an important milestone in these efforts. Plans were made at this meeting to enable bodies representing both Swedish and Finnish-speaking students to take part in joint Scandinavian activities.[205] Differences in outlook among the various representatives and sensitivity over language issues, however, served to prevent any closing of the Finnish ranks in the cause of a united approach to Scandinavian student cooperation.[206]

Information travelled quickly and relatively painlessly between the two Swedish-speaking communities. The Swedish-language Helsinki papers *Hufvudstadsbladet* and *Svenska Pressen* enjoyed a privileged position in communicating news about Finnish affairs, including the intricacies of such issues as the language dispute, to the Swedish audience. This privileged access to the Swedish media and to Sweden as a whole enjoyed by Swedish-

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203. M. Lüchou 1963, pp. 32—50.
204. N. Lüchou 1960, pp. 9—11.
205. *Studentbladet* 1.10.1922; *Ylioppilaslehti* 30.9.1922; *Uppsala Nya Tidning* 15.8.1922.
206. Klinge IV 1968, p. 120.

speaking journalists, politicians, academics and others over their Finnish-language colleagues, however, was to prove something of a problem for Finland in developing cultural relations with Sweden. Above all, it encouraged the feeling among a number of figures within the Swedish-speaking community that they had a right, by virtue of their linguistic and to a lesser extent also their social and historical background, to have a dominant say in the handling of bilateral cultural relations.

A radically different approach to cultural issues, and to relations with Sweden in particular, to that favoured by Åbo Akademi came to be adopted by the Finnish-language university in Turku. The latter made every effort to underline its status as an exclusively Finnish-language institution, in contrast to the bilingual nature of the country's major academic centre, Helsinki University. Its policies from the mid-1920s onwards were shaped in large part by the nationalist sympathies of its rector between 1924 and 1932, the writer and literary scholar V. A. Koskenniemi. The latter consistently advocated the need for Finland to concentrate on direct links with the major European centres in preference to relying on Sweden as an intermediary, as had often previously been the case, and for increased teaching of the major European languages in Finnish schools instead of Swedish.[207]

While the Swedish-speaking community focused on the major Swedish-language poets such as Runeberg, nationalist opinion looked to Snellman and his brand of nationalist philosophy for its inspiration. A large proportion of the young Finnish-speaking academic generation of the 1920s professed itself indifferent to Runeberg, who up until then had been considered the country's national poet, arguing instead for removing him altogether from his over-exalted pedestal. Students at Turku University even went so far as to decide in the late 1920s to work towards getting Runeberg's national anthem replaced by an alternative penned by Koskenniemi, suggesting that the change would better serve the needs of an independent Finland and more fully represent national aspirations.[208] The proposal, however, found little favour

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207. US 2.9.1925; *Aitosuomalainen* 4/1925.
208. *Ylioppilaslehti* 12.5.1928; *Suomen Heimo* 15.10.1928; *Aitosuomalainen* 26.10.1928. Kaarlo Lausti 1.11.1978.

with Finnish-speaking student circles in Helsinki, who in any case far outnumbered those at the still fledgling Turku University and for whom Runeberg's words represented part of their own university traditions and remained liked and respected.

These developments were closely followed, and criticised, in the pages of the Stockholm papers. Criticism of the more extreme aspects of Finnish nationalism was also particularly strong from among the country's own Swedish-speaking population. R. A. Wrede and other leading figures in the Swedish-speaking community consistently argued that, left unchecked, nationalist opinion, aiming as it did at a virtually unilingual state and at ridding Helsinki University of any vestige of Swedish-language instruction, would eventually destroy the country's traditional cultural ties with Sweden and the other Scandinavian countries and lead Finland away from her rightful place within the Western cultural community, finally reducing the country to the status of what Wrede described as a 'semi-civilised border state'.[209]

Despite the importance attached to ties with Scandinavia by the more moderate elements within the academic community, both Finnish and Swedish-speaking, the German university world and German scholarship, which had traditionally occupied an important place in Finland, continued to play a major part in shaping much of Finland's exposure to European academic developments. The post-war political transformation of Germany had little real impact in changing this. Although few Finnish cultural figures appear to have visited Germany in the immediate post-war years of 1919 and 1920, by the following year the flow of academics and writers had somewhat resumed.[210] This was paralleled by the restoration of many of the traditional academic links in a wide variety of fields, a number of which dated back to the 1860s, which had been disrupted during the war years. German scholarship, research methods and library resources had been held in high esteem in Finland since the formative latter years of the nineteenth century. Academic ties between Finnish and German universities were further fostered from the mid-1920s onwards following the

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209. See Wrede's letter of 20.5.1928 to Ingman (Ingman collection III).
210. Viljanen 1935, p. 188; *Iltalehti* 1.8.1921.

decision by the Humboldt Foundation, founded on the initiative of the German Foreign Ministry in 1925, to begin annually granting scholarships to Finnish researchers and post-graduate students. The continuing lack of scholarship funding available from Finnish sources forced Finns wanting to study abroad to make use of all possible means of financing, including, in the case of students of German philology, that of applying for posts as Finnish language lectors at German universities, such as Berlin and Greifswald. In addition to providing scholars with the opportunity to pursue their own studies, these lectorships also allowed them to establish personal contacts with leading German academics in their fields, contact which often proved of benefit in their later academic careers and research.[211]

In addition to traditional academic contacts, a new set of German cultural influences in literature and the theatre also made themselves felt in post-independence Finland. Those aspects of post-war German literature reflecting a break with the traditional admiration of Prussian militarist values found a ready audience among the young generation of Finnish writers and critics. A good example of this is the anthology of German poetry translated by the poet Uuno Kailas entitled 'Kaunis Saksa' (Germany the fair), which appeared in 1924.[212] A number of Finland-Swedish writers, among them Edith Södergran, Hagar Olsson and Elmer Diktonius, were also influenced by expressionist trends from Continental Europe, and Germany in particular. Their enthusiasm for adopting European influences brought them, however, together with *Ultra*, the short-lived bilingual literary journal most identified with championing their cause, much criticism from the conservative literary establishment in Finland and, conversely, positive recognition in more liberal Sweden.[213] Berlin was a powerful centre for experimentation in the theatre and attracted many leading Finnish directors. A striking result of this contact with the mainstream of European modernism was the emergence of German-style

211. For example, Emil Öhmann served as a lector at Berlin University between 1922 and 1924, and A. Rosenqvist at Greifswald between 1921—25 and at Berlin from 1925 to 1933.
212. Saarenheimo 1966, p. 90.
213. O. Enckell 1946, pp. 186—93; Warburton 1951, pp. 218—33.

expressionism in the Finnish theatre, especially evident in the productions of the Tampere Workers' Theatre under Kosti Elo.[214]

During the early 1920s, Finnish architecture began to move away from its former adherence to national romanticist styles and open up to the classicist influences from Sweden and Italy which began to make themselves felt around this time.[215] Towards the end of the decade, attitudes gradually began to turn against classicism in favour of modernism, with new ideas and influence mainly coming from the German school and from architects working in France and Holland. This shift closely reflected the overall trend in European architecture away from established traditions, aided and abetted by the pattern of wider social development and change affecting the Continent, towards the rectilinear forms and rationalist philosophy of the functionalist school.

The breakthrough of this new functionalist style identified with the likes of Le Courbusier came in 1927, with the holding of a major housing exhibition in Stuttgart, which served to consolidate the new movement's position as the dominant school in modern architecture. Functionalist influences soon began to be evident in the work of young Finnish architects, such as Alvar Aalto and Erik Bryggman, who had visited Stuttgart. International functionalist ideas were combined in the work of the Finnish modernists with a desire to develop independent forms of expression and uses of material.[216] Despite the undeniable impact these new architectural ideas had in Finland, at least among the younger generation of architects, there still remained a number of the older generation, including such prominent figures as Lars Sonck, who retained their attachment to essentially national romantic styles. For these architects, foreign influences played a much smaller part in their development than for the younger generation, and they were often restricted to providing little more than a slightly modernistic surface colouring to their established architectural styles.

Germany's role, as a heavily industrialised country with strong

214. Orasmaa 1976, pp. 55—6, 134, 191.
215. J. Sirén's Parliament building, together with a number of Erik Bryggman's and Alvar Aalto's early projects, amongst others, for example, are essentially classical in inspiration.
216. P. Blomstedt 1928, pp. 26—7; Ringbom 1978, pp. 320—1.

manufacturing traditions, in influencing developments in Finland was also particularly evident in industry and technical education. Independence had brought with it a new set of pressures and challenges for industry and technological research. The latter in particular, restricted during the first wave of industrialisation in the late nineteenth century by the small size of the domestic industrial base and a lack of adequate facilities and educated manpower, had for long failed to keep up with major developments abroad. Some improvement in the situation had been brought with the founding of the Technical University in 1908, created on the base of its more modest predecessor, the Polytechnical Institute. The new university proved instrumental in improving contact with foreign developments, modernizing the technical and economic base in Finland and in encouraging homegrown innovation. Teaching and research at the Technical University drew heavily on the German Fachhochschule tradition of technical education, helped by the similarity of German and Finnish technical standards. Contact in the technical and industrial fields was, in fact, largely dominated by Germany, with Finland enjoying virtually no contact with France and only minimal ties with Britain, as a result of the fact that German was the major, and often the only foreign language widely spoken by Finnish engineers and technical researchers. Contact with Sweden in this field was, for obvious reasons, nevertheless also relatively close and particularly evident in the heavy and electrical industries.

Interest in French culture, and Paris in particular, was well established in certain circles in Finland. This gained new life in the early 1920s with the visits to Paris of a wide spectrum of Finnish artists, writers and performers, including such figures as Juho Rissanen, Emil Cedercreutz, L. Onerva and Anna Hagelstam.[217] Paris continued to exert the special, almost romantic attraction which it had done in the nineteenth century. Among the younger generation of Finnish writers of the period, Koskenniemi, Mika Waltari, particularly in his first novel 'Suuri illusioni' (1928: The Grand Illusion), and Arvi Kivimaa, were particularly affected

217. Hbl 29.5.1921.

by their contacts with the city.[218] All in all, however, the absolute numbers involved nevertheless remained relatively small.

The central role of Paris as a place of study and pilgrimage for artists remained prominent after the ending of trips to Russia following the Revolution and the decline which took place in the popularity of travelling to Britain.[219] The range of coverage and awareness of developments abroad in the visual arts, which had significantly expanded and diversified in post-independence Finland, served to make artists less dependent than they had been previously on individual trips to European artistic centres. Magazines and the leading newspapers increasingly devoted space to the visual arts and a growing amount of literature on the fine arts also appeared, helped by improvements in the quality of printing and reproduction. This all served to open up a wider range of art, both to the artistic community and to the general public as a whole.

The artistic community during the 1920s was largely split into two major groupings, the Septem and Marraskuu groups, both dating back to pre-independence days. The latter of the two represented a clear break with national traditions and a more open attitude towards adopting and exploiting international influences, with artists belonging to it favouring expressionist styles and, to a lesser extent, cubist ideas. The Septem group, which by the 1920s had passed its peak of activity, was closer to Impressionism and subsequent French movements such as Fauvism.[220] Many modernist artists, however, were subject to sharp criticism, part of it clearly and unashamedly politically-motivated, by conservative critics and commentators for their break with the national tradition. Their ideas and work were disparagingly labelled as revolutionary and as amounting to a form of 'cultural Bolshevism' undermining the basis of Finnish society.[221]

French drama and the Paris theatre world, in line with German drama, which had for long had a significant impact in Finland, played an important part in developments in the Finnish theatre

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218. *Itsenäinen Suomi* 1.6.1926; Viljanen 1935, pp. 171—7; Kivimaa 1974, p. 73; M. Waltari 1978, pp. 58—62.
219. See Suomen Kuvataiteilijat. Elämäkerrasto (1962).
220. Ringbom 1978, pp. 230, 235—40; Okkonen II 1945, pp. 233—4, 252—3, 299.
221. *Ajan Sana* 24.10., 8.11.1930.

during the 1920s. Visits to Paris and other foreign centres by Finnish directors had an important role in shaping theatre repertoires and influencing decisions on which foreign plays would be translated. Contact with trends abroad also exposed those working in the theatre in Finland to foreign styles of direction, acting, stage design and lighting, many aspects of which could be picked up without a detailed knowledge of local languages, a fact which made up for the restrictions otherwise imposed by the sometimes limited linguistic skills of Finnish actors and directors. French drama, and Molière in particular, was prominent in the repertoire of the National Theatre under the directorship of Eino Kalima, alongside the established classics, such as Shakespeare, Schiller, Goethe and the Greek masters.[222]

Wider interest in the French, as well as the British arts, was nevertheless restricted in Finland by the powerful position of German culture and the wide knowledge of German among the intelligentsia and the upper classes, coupled with the typically widespread lack of knowledge of any other major West European languages. French, it is true, had traditionally been spoken and used to some extent among the upper classes, but by the 1920s it was little taught in most schools with the exception of some girls schools, being restricted to the position of an optional language in the higher grades. The position of English was even worse, with only a very small proportion of the population able to use or communicate in it.

The small overall numbers of those actively interested in developing Finnish relations with France and Britain, and the relatively low level of public interest in these two countries in the immediate wake of the ending of the First World War, had been reflected in the decision to found a single joint association to foster interest in the two countries, the Cercle Franco-Anglais, rather than two independent societies. This soon failed, however, to satisfy those more interested in French culture, who began to push for a separate organisation solely devoted to French affairs similar to that which had existed prior to the war. The Societé Franco-Finlandais was finally founded in 1924 under the guidance of Professors Axel Wallenskiöld and Yrjö Hirn and the academic and

222. Koskimies 1972, pp. 54—7; Kalima 1968.

translator Jean Perret.[223] Cultural links with France were also further helped by the programme of scholarships designed to assist Finns to study in France which was introduced by the French government at the beginning of the 1920s, perhaps the first such arrangement independent Finland enjoyed with a foreign power.

A particular characteristic of the late 1920s, and one not really seen before on the same scale, was the attempt by a number of young Finnish writers to systematically develop a better awareness of cultural currents and developments affecting the mainstream of European culture as a whole, rather than any one particular country. This desire to shake off what was seen as Finland's backwoods inheritance and to prevent the country from remaining cut off from the forefront of modern European developments in industry, technology, communications and transport, was particularly prominent among the loose association of young writers known as the Tulenkantajat group (The Fire Bearers). In analysing the reasons behind Finland's traditional isolation from the rest of Europe, this group identified the country's Swedish-language traditions as partly to blame, and called for Finland to aim for closer direct ties with Continental Europe bypassing Sweden. This desire to broaden Finnish social and cultural horizons was directed virtually solely towards Western Europe and embraced a strong antipathy towards Communism, which was seen as posing a direct and real danger to small countries like Finland.[224]

Olavi Paavolainen, one of the main figures in the short-lived Tulenkantajat group, wrote in glowing terms of the modern movement in Europe committed to redrawing established views of the world in the arts and related fields, as in his travelogue 'Nykyaikaa etsimässä'(1928: In Search of the Modern). The collection of poetry entitled 'Valtatiet' (Highways), produced in collaboration by Waltari and Paavolainen which appeared in 1929, and which in its celebration of all that was modern and European summed up the neo-romantic cosmopolitanism typical of the

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223. On the development and activities of the Cercle Franco-Finlandais during the 1920s, see the association's archive (Ranskalainen koulu, Helsinki). Also see the report of the French envoy in Helsinki sent to Paris dated 2.3.1924 (AAEF, Finlande).

224. Tulenkantajat — Albumi 1927, p. 10; *Tulenkantajat* 30.11.1928, 3.1.1929.

Tulenkantajat group as a whole, also highlighted the contrast existing between the modernists and the sympathies and aims of the more conservative, nationalist sections of opinion, as represented by organisations like the Academic Karelian Society (AKS).[225] The uncompromisingly internationalist nature of the modernists grouped around the Tulenkantajat, together with their powerful belief in the rightness of what they felt they stood for, was the cause of much bitter and aggressive debate and made them a number of enemies. Thanks to them, however, and to a number of other developments, Finnish cultural life in the latter half of the 1920s had a distinctly more international outlook to it than during the early half of the decade.

Finland possessed few established cultural ties with Britain compared to those existing with Germany and France. The restricted knowledge of English typical of Finnish society of the time and which extended into the universities, together with the lack of a scholarship system similar to those maintained by France and Germany, only reinforced this. Unlike the German universities, no Finnish lectorships existed at British universities, although plans were made at the end of the 1920s to remedy this by setting up a post at London University. Characteristic of the relatively low level of interest existing in the Finnish academic world towards British scholarship was the case of Uno Lindelöf, who, although serving as Professor of English at Helsinki University during the 1920s, mainly concentrated on his other interest, German linguistics, and devoted little time to British subjects.[226] Academic contacts between Finland and Britain were largely concentrated around the group of sociologists specialising in the study of non-European peoples working under Edvard Westermarck, who held professorships at both Åbo Akademi and London University. Apart from the few links which existed between Finnish and British economists, there seems to have been little communication between the two academic communities in

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225. Tulenkantajat — Albumi 1927, p. 33; Enäjärvi 1928, pp. 46—80; Saarenheimo 1966, pp. 211—14.
226. On the plans for a Finnish lectorship at London University, see A. H. Saastamoinen's communication of 11.3.1928 to Hugo Suolahti (Hugo Suolahti collection).

the natural sciences, medicine or applied engineering.[227]

Despite the language problem, British literature was relatively well known as a result of the wide number of translations available, embracing a spectrum extending from Kipling and Bernard Shaw to Somerset Maugham and a large amount of light fiction. Kersti Bergroth and Alex Matson, both of whom kept in close touch with developments in the arts in Europe as a whole, published a periodical entitled 'Sininen kirja' (The Blue Book) during the late 1920s especially devoted to broadening popular familiarity with British literature.[228] The founding of a separate association for Franco-Finnish interests in 1924 to replace the shared Cercle Franco-Anglais deprived Finnish Anglophiles of a forum capable of coordinating activities aimed at widening popular awareness of British culture and developing linguistic skills, forcing them to rely on the small British Library in Helsinki until the founding of the Finnish-British Society in 1926 provided them with a replacement.[229] The new society drew its main members from among those working in the export world and the cooperative movement and, unlike the Societé Franco-Finlandais, lacked members from the arts and academic worlds, again reflecting the latter fields' general lack of ties with Britain.[230]

A number of new associations modelled on ideas from the English-speaking world, and particularly from Britain, emerged during the 1920s, for all the general lack of ties between Finland and Britain and America. A branch of the PEN Club, the international literary organisation founded in Britain in 1921, was set up in Helsinki in 1928 to foster contacts between Finnish and foreign writers.[231] The Rotary movement found its way to Finland in the latter half of the 1920s, but initially achieved only a modest impact, with no more than two local associations being founded during the decade, in Helsinki and Turku. Freemasonry was revived, after a long period of having been banned by the Russian

227. On the Westermarck school, see Alapuro et al 1973, pp. 64—78. The economist Bruno Suviranta studied in London between 1920—1.
228. Varpio 1971, pp. 16—17; Kivimaa II 1977, pp. 27—8.
229. The Finnish-British Society, Helsinki 1926—1976, p. 4.
230. Professor Westermarck was among the very few academics belonging to the Society.
231. PEN-klubi 1978, pp. 15—16.

authorities, in the early 1920s, this time the impetus coming not from Britain but from Sweden and the United States. The role of the latter countries was reflected in the decision of the Swedish-speaking lodges to join the Stockholm Grand Lodge, and in the particular part played by American freemasonry in shaping the ideas of the founders of the Finnish Grand Lodge, founded in 1924.[232]

Cultural relations between Finland and the Soviet Union, like those between Finland and Britain, were similarly restricted by linguistic problems, but also suffered as a result of the strong and widespread political antipathies felt towards Soviet Russia in post-independence Finland. These latter owed their origins to the characteristic anti-Russian and anti-Bolshevik opinion typical of the period in Finland and to the partly self-imposed and partly forced isolation from outside contacts of the Soviet Union itself. Despite these factors, a number of pre-revolutionary Russian classic authors such as Dostoevsky, Chekhov and Tolstoy continued to have an influence on literary circles and the public as a whole. Russian traditions in a number of other areas, such as popular music and Gypsy music, also remained well to the fore, despite the political disaffection between the two countries.[233] Traditional Russian motifs featured strongly in much of the Finnish popular music produced during the early independence years, before they began to be displaced as the decade wore on with the rise in popularity of influences from Germany and the United States and, to a lesser extent, Sweden. Western influence only really achieved a breakthrough in the following decade, however.

Russian performing artists, popular musicians, singers and dancers appeared sporadically in Helsinki during the early 1920s, but these were emigrés in the main. Soviet artists began to appear during the latter part of the decade, but only in small numbers.[234] Something of the hostility felt within nationalist circles, even to

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232. Viisikymmenvuotias Suomen V. ja O. M. Suur-Loosi (1974), pp. 16—32.
233. Toivo Kärki 12.1.1982.
234. See the coverage of visits by foreign performers contained in *Suomen Kuvalehti* 1922—26.

this low level of contact, was indicated in the debate on the subject which appeared in the pages of the student newspaper *Ylioppilaslehti* in the mid-1920s, and which gave prominent coverage to the uncompromising view that no place for things Russian or Soviet existed in independent Finland. More liberal voices, like those of Professor Arvid Grotenfelt, predicted that extreme nationalism of this sort would prove fateful to Finland, and condemned the almost mindless hostility towards the Soviet Union encouraged by it, but to no real avail.[235]

In an effort to introduce the Finnish public to Soviet culture, the radical socialists sponsored publication of an illustrated weekly magazine entitled *Itä ja Länsi* (East and West), which began appearing from 1924 onwards. Following the tenth anniversary celebrations of the October Revolution in Moscow, the idea was floated by a number of Finnish left-wing radicals who had attended of founding an organisation or association devoted to fostering cultural relations between the Soviet Union and Finland, to follow up the work of *Itä ja Länsi*.[236] Not surprisingly, however, given the prevailing political atmosphere of the time, the idea failed to gain any wider support outside of this narrow circle.

Finland's linguistic isolation presented a major problem in hampering the promotion and success of Finnish culture abroad, although less so for those sections of the arts which did not rely directly on the spoken word. Finnish music, in fact, enjoyed reasonable popularity abroad and was performed relatively widely in London, Berlin and Vienna. Sibelius, in particular, was well known and liked in Britain, the United States and the Scandinavian countries, in part through the efforts of such Finnish conductors as Georg Schneevoigt and Armas Järnefelt, who worked extensively abroad.[237] Finnish architecture, in contrast, remained very much in the position of a receiver, rather than an exporter of influences at this stage. Eliel Saarinen's move to the United States, where he was to enjoy considerable success, at the

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235. Klinge IV 1968, pp. 62—4; *Ylioppilaslehti* 3.3., 10.3.1923; Hbl 7.2.1924. Sven Krohn 4.1.1979.
236. *Itä-Länsi* 1924—1929. Toivo Karvonen 14.12.1982.
237. Wallner 1968, pp. 60, 85—7, 93, 130.

beginning of the 1920s, was very much an exception to the general trend. Finnish art was known abroad largely only in Scandinavia. A joint exhibition of work by a dozen or so Finnish artists was held in Gothenburg in Sweden in 1923, and a large exhibition of work by Magnus Enckell in Stockholm in 1925. An extensive survey of work by over an hundred modern Finnish artists, including Wäinö Aaltonen, Eero Järnefelt, Pekka Halonen and Alvar Cawén, was shown in Stockholm in 1929.[238]

Finnish culture, and Finnish literature in particular, probably enjoyed its greatest success abroad in Estonia, with translations of Finnish literature especially prominent. Estonia, together with Sweden, accounted for the majority of translations of Finnish literature which appeared during the 1920s.[239] Finland's cultural profile in Sweden and Scandinavia was inevitably powerfully shaped by the country's Swedish-speaking artists, writers, critics and academics, who generally enjoyed a significant head-start over their Finnish-speaking colleagues in promoting Finnish work in the Nordic area. Internationally, however, it was the latter who mainly dominated, as in the academic world, where precisely those scholars involved in fields with a strong basis in Finnish-language material, such as Finno-Ugrian linguistics, folklore and ethnography, probably achieved the greatest international recognition of any Finnish academics.[240]

In common with the literatures of many small states, Finnish literature encountered a multitude of difficulties in acquiring a readership outside its domestic market and in establishing a steady flow of translations across a reasonable spread of international languages. This was not helped by the tendency of translators of the time to favour a narrow section of writers and books, including such classics as Aleksis Kivi's 'Seitsemän Veljestä' (Seven Brothers), which appeared in both German and English during the 1920s, and the folk poetry-based epic, the 'Kalevala', which had

238. The exhibitions in question were 'Nordisk konst. Jubileumutställningen' in Gothenburg (1923), 'Magnus Enckells utställning' in Stockholm (1925) and 'Finlands nutida konst' in Stockholm (1929).
239. Haltsonen—Puranen 1979, pp. 99—112.
240. See volumes 30—126 (1919—1939) of the series Folklore Fellows Communications, originally founded by Prof. Kaarle Krohn in 1910. Despite its English-language title, most of the series' contents were in German.

been widely translated ever since its appearance in the nineteenth century. Of more recent fiction, Johannes Linnankoski's romantic novel 'Laulu tulipunaisesta kukasta' (The Song of the Blood Red Flower) and F. E. Sillanpää's 'Nuorena nukkunut' (The Maid Silja or Fallen Asleep While Young) both achieved considerable success abroad and were translated into a number of languages.[241]

8. Finnish sport's international breakthrough

Sport had played something of a special role in opening up Finland's international contacts during the latter years of autonomy, with Finnish teams taking part in international competitions in their own right enjoying a good measure of success abroad. The last pre-independence Olympics held in Stockholm in 1912 marked a particular achievement on the part of the large Finnish team which took part, and saw Finland take her place among the leading athletic nations of the time. This was only partly overshadowed by a minor, but at the same time symbolic disagreement between the Finnish and Russian teams over a Finnish attempt to unfurl the flag of a Helsinki sports club during the opening ceremony to supplement the team's original modest banner marking the Finnish section off from the rest of the Russian team.[242]

Although independence saw the ending of the restrictions on Finnish participation abroad previously imposed by the Russian authorities, it did not bring a complete end to the troubles affecting Finnish sport. The years of political upheaval immediately preceding independence, and above all the events of 1918, came to have a deep and divisive impact on the pattern of post-war sporting activities.

Organised sports activities had got under way on a wide scale following the founding of the Finnish Athletics Federation (SVUL) in 1906, but what sense of unity there was within the organisation had soon given way to internal wrangling, as tensions between working class and other local sports associations intensified from

241. Haltsonen—Puranen 1979.
242. Paasivirta 1962, pp. 36—7.

1913 onwards.[243] The quantity and bitterness of these politically-motivated internal disputes led to a number of calls from within the socialist-controlled clubs for the setting up of a separate and independent central federation along the lines of similar organisations abroad. Although a separate socialist sports paper, *Työväen Urheilulehti*, began to appear from the summer of 1917 onwards, no real moves were made at this stage towards creating the proposed new federation.[244] The decisive step towards splitting the sports movement did not take long in coming, however. The initiative was taken by the governing body of the SVUL itself, in the shape of a decision to expel the clubs of sportsmen who had supported or taken part in the Civil War on the Red side from the Federation in the latter half of November 1918. The uncompromising stand taken by the Federation's leadership on the expulsion issue led to the setting up of a new sports federation, the Workers' Athletic Union (TUL), in January 1919 by the expelled clubs, laying the ground for a deepening of hostilities between the two groups.

The tension between these two competing organisations inevitably spilled over into the debate which developed over Finland's possible participation in the summer Olympics of 1920 to be held in Antwerp, already highly politicized as a result of the International Olympic Committee's decision to bar Germany and her wartime allies from participating. Despite the wide awareness of the significant role sport and the Olympics in particular had played in the pre-war period in making Finland known abroad, there were many, given the background of continuing strong pro-German opinion in the country, who were reluctant to support Finland's participation in any games at which German participants and those from her past allies would be excluded from taking part.

The debate which developed from the summer of 1919 onwards within the SVUL and the press over Finland's possible participation at Antwerp reflected the sharply opposing battle lines which had already developed over the issue. Aksel Ek, the chairman of the SVUL's organising committee, described the Antwerp Games in a newspaper interview as likely to be a second-

243. Lauri Pihkala 29.10.1972.
244. Hentilä I 1982, pp. 60—5.

rate Olympics if major national teams were to be excluded. Lauri Pihkala, a leading sports commentator and organiser, considered the choice of Antwerp to stage the Games an unfortunate one and only likely to reopen the wounds of the recently concluded war.[245] An appeal was issued at the beginning of October the same year by those opposed to the Antwerp Games calling on the country's sportsmen not to compete in any Olympics at which participants from Germany and her wartime allies would be barred.[246] Instead, it was suggested that a separate Olympics between sportsmen from the neutral countries could be held in Stockholm to coincide with the official Antwerp Games.[247]

A combination of a number of non sport-related factors, however, eventually served to take the wind out of the sails of the campaign for a Finnish boycott of the Antwerp Games. Prominent among these was the general need felt among the country's leadership to exploit all the available means of reinforcing Finland's new, independent national identity; the Olympics were seen as an ideal forum in this respect. Within the sporting community itself, participation in the 1920 Games was seen by many as particularly important, both after the dispute that had surrounded Finland's role in the previous Stockholm Games and as a means of further consolidating Finland's standing in international sport. With the plans for an alternative Games failing to make much headway in gaining wider support, Finland in any case was faced with the real possibility of remaining completely out in the cold. At the end of March 1920, the SVUL leadership bowed to the inevitable and announced its decision to support Finland's participation in the Antwerp Games. Not forgetting its earlier pro-German sympathies, however, and in the light of the prospect of Germany's remaining barred from taking part, it was also decided to propose a visit by the entire Finnish Olympic team to Berlin, to take part in a friendly competition with a German national team, after the Antwerp Games, as in fact happened.[248]

The attitude of the Workers' Athletic Union to the Antwerp

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245. US 13.7.1919; *Suomen Urheilulehti* 27.7.1919.
246. *Suomen Urheilulehti* 7.10.1919.
247. UA 9.2., 18.2.1920; *Aamulehti* 11.2.1920.
248. *Suomen Urheilulehti* 30.3.1920; US 30.3.1920; UA 31.3.1920; *Suomen Urheilulehti* 31.8., 2.9.1920.

Olympics had been cautious from the start, deriving in part from the tense events surrounding the Federation's founding. The status of the new organisation as a national umbrella federation coordinating working class sports activities had also yet to be fully established. In addition, the TUL leadership feared that the pressure within society to choose sportsmen with uncontroversial character backgrounds for the national team could easily be used to discriminate against sportsmen belonging to clubs affiliated to the TUL, by labelling them as politically or socially unsuitable to represent their country abroad.[249] Some fierce criticism was directed against the Western allies, which were described as making the Olympics an event 'celebrating the victory of imperialism'.[250] Remembering the close links which existed between the TUL and the left wing of the labour movement, this was probably as much a condemnation of the West's inter-ventionist and economic blockade policies directed against the Soviet Union as a protest against the Games themselves.

For all the disputes preceding the actual Games, the relatively small Finnish team which eventually participated enjoyed considerable success in Antwerp, embracing good results in wrestling as well as in the track and field events which had become Finnish athletes' forte. In fact, the 1920 Finnish team proved even more successful than that which had taken part in the pre-war Stockholm Games. Hannes Kolehmainen, who had been one of the most successful Finnish athletes at the Games eight years before, now won the marathon and was joined as one of the leading participants by the young Paavo Nurmi, who made a spectacular first appearance, winning two gold medals and one silver. In a medal table headed by the United States, Finland achieved a very respectable fifth place overall.[251] One cloud over the result, however, was represented by the fact that the Finnish team participating in Antwerp received no financial support from the government and had to rely entirely on funds provided from voluntary contributions. The popularity of the Games with the public at large was reflected in the wide coverage they were given

249. *Työväen Urheilulehti* 30.6.1920.
250. *Työväen Urheilulehti* 15.2., 30.4.1920.
251. Nygrén—Siukonen 1978, p. 170.

in the press of the time.[252]

In the years that followed, the SVUL was successful in establishing a network of international sports contacts, enabling the holding of Franco-Finnish athletics competitions from 1922 onwards and numerous competitions with the Scandinavian countries, particularly Sweden, which had previously only taken part in regular joint meetings with her western neighbours, Norway and Denmark. Prominent among these latter joint Scandinavian events were the games held in Gothenburg in Sweden in 1923, which served as a run-up for the 1924 Olympics, and the regular Finnish-Swedish athletics meetings held every other year from 1925 onwards.

The Paris Olympics of 1924 brought Finland even greater athletic success than had the Antwerp Games, and went a long way to further establishing the country's reputation as a leading athletics nation. A number of individual Finnish competitors became the subject of international attention. Paavo Nurmi, who managed to win five gold medals, two on the same day, gradually began to take on the proportions of an athletics legend, while Ville Ritola's reputation as a long-distance runner also began to spread. The exceptional success of the Finnish team in Paris was the cause of particular celebration in Finland, celebration which had a number of indirect repercussions beyond the narrow confines of sport itself.[253] For a relatively isolated country on the periphery of Europe, international sporting success, and on the scale seen at the Paris Games, served as a welcome fillip to national self-confidence. Much play was made of the extent of the Finnish success given the small population of the country compared to her competitors.[254]

At the same time as sportsmen were elevated to the status of virtual national heroes, sport as a whole acquired an exceptionally

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252. On the financial problems surrounding the Finnish team, see US 2.4.1920; *Suomen Urheilulehti* 4.5.1920. For coverage of the Games themselves, see HS 15.8.—24.8.1920; US 15.8.—24.8.1920; Hbl 16.8.—23.8.1920; SS 16.8.—25.8.1920; *Suomen Urheilulehti* 14.9.1920; HS 4.9.1920.
253. The circulation of the sports paper *Suomen Urheilulehti* rose, for ex., during 1924 from around 8,000 to some 24,000.
254. HS 6.7.1924; US 12.7.1924; Hbl 15.7.1924. For coverage of the Antwerp Games, see SS 7.7.—14.7.1924, 22.7.1924.

pronounced role as a form of popular recreation. This was in marked contrast to the popularity of sport and attitudes towards sporting achievements in Finland's closest neighbour Sweden, where sport tended to be seen very much as a private hobby or form of recreation, lacking the aura of earnest commitment and nationalist flavour more typical of Finnish attitudes.[255] In the enthusiasm born out of the country's successes at the various post-war Olympics, there was a tendency for observers in Finland to draw over-positive conclusions about the degree of international impact the publicity surrounding the Games had in raising the level of international awareness of Finland. Many people failed to realise that those circles abroad interested in sport were not necessarily the same as those which were important in making political, diplomatic or commercial decisions affecting Finland, and that mere knowledge of Finnish sporting achievements or the names of leading Finnish sportsmen did not guarantee any wider awareness about any other aspect of Finland or Finnish society.

Finland's international sporting success continued at the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics, which also saw the participation of a German team and an increased number of teams from countries outside Europe. In track and field events, the 1928 Finnish team enjoyed even greater success in relative terms than the team which had competed four years earlier in Paris, given the fact that a number of long-distance events at which the Finns had proved themselves especially able had been removed from the events programme in the interim.[256]

In contrast, the level of Finnish sporting success at the two Winter Olympics held during the 1920s never reached that achieved at the summer Games. A number of Finns did nevertheless manage to make some impact, among them Clas Thunberg, who virtually dominated the speed skating events at the winter Games in 1924 and 1928, and Julius Skutnabb, who excelled in the long-distance events. No one proved able to challenge the Norwegians in the skiing events, however.[257] Norway, Finland and Sweden all enjoyed reasonable success, but none dramatically

255. Edwin Wide 21.11.1979.
256. Nygrén—Siukonen 1978, pp. 189—91, 204. Sulo Kolkka 4.10.1979.
257. Nygrén—Siukonen 1978, pp. 668—70.

more so than any of the others. In non-Olympic competition, Finnish skiers scored particular success at the Holmenkollen Games in Norway in 1922, with the double victory of Anton Collin and Tapani Niku in the 50 kilometre cross-country event. Good results also began to emerge in skiing events at the Salpausselkä Games, which began to be held in Finland from 1923 onwards.[258]

The Finnish success at the Paris Olympics, together with the steady increase in sport's overall popularity typical of the period, encouraged the leadership of the Workers' Athletic Union, which had in the meanwhile developed its own network of international sporting contacts with parallel organisations in Central Europe, Norway and Estonia and Latvia, to select a TUL team to take part in the first workers' international sports meeting to be held in Frankfurt am Main in the summer of 1925. Here too, Finnish sportsmen enjoyed considerable success, winning a number of victories in track and field events and wrestling.[259] The number of countries competing in these games, however, was relatively small and the level of results fell well short of that achieved at the Paris Olympics.

The internal unity of the TUL was severely undermined during the course of the 1920s as a result of various disputes which emerged within the organisation. These mainly owed their origin to the split which had taken place in the international workers' sports movement between the socialist sports international founded in 1920 and based in Lucerne, and the communist-backed sports international based in Moscow founded the following year.[260] Some disagreement had made itself felt at the time of the decision over participation in the Frankfurt Games organised by the Lucerne-based socialist organisation, but a head-on confrontation was avoided. The gaining of a majority by the Social Democrats at the TUL conference in 1927, however, saw the question of the possible participation of a TUL-sponsored team in the Spartakiad Games, to be held the next year in Moscow, develop into a major dispute. The bulk of the TUL leadership, in line with the view adopted by the Lucerne-based socialist sports inter-

258. Eljanko—Kirjavainen 1969, pp. 123—4, 320.
259. Nygrén 1968, pp. 40—1 and appendix.
260. Ibid., pp. 10—14.

national, came out against taking part. This did not, however, prevent some TUL members taking part in the Moscow games, a move which came to represent the prelude to a major parting of the ways for the labour sports movement. The leadership's reaction to the latters' participation took the form of a decision to expel them all, a total of some 70 to 80 sportsmen, from the Union, together with their clubs as well if they refused to abide by the ruling. The opposition refused to take this lying down, and the rebel clubs thus expelled retorted by organising themselves into a separate, breakaway national workers' sports federation (TYK). A number of individual sportsmen who had taken part in the Moscow games, such as Volmari Iso-Hollo and Gunnar Bärlund, however, left the workers' sports movement altogether to join the non-socialist SVUL.[261]

9. Foreign perspectives on Finland during the 1920s

Finland's gaining of independence had been seen in Sweden as a significant step forward, not only for Finland herself, but also indirectly for Sweden as well, thanks to its beneficial impact on Sweden's own international position. Increasing concern, however, began to be expressed as 1918 receded at the slow rate of Finland's recovery from the turmoil of the years immediately surrounding independence and the persistence of the legacy of internal disputes and social conflicts which had been inherited from that period. Particular attention was drawn to the slowness of Finnish moves directed towards coming to a peace agreement with Soviet Russia, and to the degree of Finnish enthusiasm over the East Karelian issue. The latter was seen across a broad spectrum of the Swedish press, including a number of the major non-socialist papers, as little short of dangerous political adventurism. Most commentators argued that Finland would be well advised to abandon all her expansionist aims in the East. Little sympathy was similarly felt towards Finnish attempts to develop a

261. Hentilä I 1982, pp. 210—14, 219—20, 254—7; Nygrén 1968, p. 64.

closer relationship with the Baltic republics, which tended to be looked upon in Sweden as culturally and politically distant and as possessing, at best, an uncertain future.[262]

Closer Swedo-Finnish relations proved difficult to achieve during the early years of Finnish independence, mainly as a result of the lengthy Åland Islands dispute. The stance taken by the League of Nations in its final decision on the issue in Finland's favour was seen in Sweden as amounting to a major defeat for Swedish diplomacy and the Swedish position overall, as well as for those politicians, Hjalmar Branting among the most prominent, who had worked towards achieving a solution favourable to Sweden. In putting the Swedish case over the Islands to the League, Branting, whose sympathies during the war years had been very much with the Allies and who had been encouraged by the West's championing of the cause of national self-determination, had directly appealed to the need to implement the principle in the case of the Åland Islands. By acceding to the Finnish case, Branting suggested, the League had undermined the very basis of its ideals and in a way likely to reduce future international confidence in the organisation.[263]

Branting's dismay at the League's decision was echoed in the comments of *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* on the issue, which underlined the continuing slender measure of influence in European affairs exercised by the small nations of the region and what was seen as the incongruity between the high ideals espoused by Western leaders and what they amounted to in practice.[264] *Svenska Dagbladet* and *Stockholms Dagblad*, both sharing similar right-wing sympathies to *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, also underscored the setback for Sweden contained in the League's decision. At the same time, they emphasised Sweden's continuing loyalty to the League and its ideals.[265] Criticism of the League's decision was more muted among the liberal Swedish papers, which tended to point to its positive aspects, such as the international agreement covering the Islands' demilitarisation and the ban on fortifications,

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262. Kalela 1971, pp. 57—8, 69—72. Also see the report of the Swedish envoy in Helsinki to Stockholm dated 3.11.1922 (UD HP1Af).
263. Gihl 1951, pp. 429—40; Soc-Dem 1.7.1921; *Le Temps* 2.7.1921.
264. NDA 25.6.1921.
265. SvD 26.6.1921.

and the guarantees covering the local population's continued use of Swedish. *Dagens Nyheter* stressed the necessity of coming to terms with the new situation and the importance of working towards improving Finnish-Swedish relations. *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning*, while describing Finland's overall position as having been strengthened by the diplomatic victory she had won at Geneva, focused on Finland's possible future isolation, which it saw as likely to spell danger for Sweden.[266]

The rapid disappearance of the Åland question from public debate in Sweden after June 1921 has been seen as indicating that the country's official policy on the issue lacked significant support from the mass of public opinion.[267] Whatever the case, developing better relations with Finland was quickly adopted as a general aim of Swedish foreign policy in the period that followed. The general resistance which surfaced towards the idea of a bilateral defensive alliance between the two countries, put forward by the Swedish Foreign Minister, Hedenstierna, in 1923, however, served to show the essentially limited extent of Swedish interests in the question. The majority Swedish view favoured a normalisation of relations between the two countries, rather than any form of closer association. Sweden, in fact, wanted to avoid any direct foreign policy or other political ties with Finland that might undermine her policy of neutrality, one which continued to enjoy wide support, particularly in the light of the obvious benefits it had brought Sweden during the First World War. While willing to take part in the activities of the League of Nations, Sweden wanted to avoid involving herself in any other international commitments which might conceivably restrict her overall room for manoeuvre. This was made succinctly plain in a statement made by the Swedish Prime Minister, Hjalmar Branting, in October 1922 in which he laid out Sweden's attitudes to Finland and the Baltic republics: 'It is a long step from expressing our sympathy towards these countries and our affirmation that their independence is of considerable benefit to us, to committing ourselves to militarily intervene in their defence.'[268]

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266. DN 26.6.1921.
267. Tingsten 1964, pp. 146—7. Also see Werner Söderhjelm's letter of 26.6.1922 to Ståhlberg (Ståhlberg collection 31).
268. Kalela 1971, p. 109.

Swedish attitudes towards Finland and developments in Finnish society during the 1920s varied widely between different commentators and political groupings. In the case of the language dispute and the wider language question which lay behind it, which had traditionally been the subject of some interest and concern within the wider spectrum of Swedish opinion, although most pronouncedly on the Right, interest became increasingly restricted to non-socialist circles. The continuing concern felt towards the position of the Swedish-speaking community in Finland was closely reflected in the choice of Finnish issues covered in the majority of the Swedish press of the time, and in the tone of its editorial comment on developments in Finland, much of which was critical of the Finnish-speaking majority. The more extreme and uncompromising aims of the Finnish nationalist movement were identified as especially dangerous to the future of the Swedish-speaking minority.[269] For the Swedish labour movement, in contrast, the Finnish language question proved of little overall interest. The arguments and disputes surrounding the status of Swedish as a language of instruction and administration at Helsinki University were seen as largely irrelevant to the Swedish working class, although this did not prevent the appearance of some adverse comment directed against the more radical expressions of Finnish nationalism which surfaced as part of this dispute.

What did command the interest of commentators writing for the social democratic press was the continuing shadow the Civil War and its aftermath cast on Finnish society and, in particular, over the position of the Left in Finnish political life. Everything which pointed to the continuing oppressed position of the labour movement provided popular copy for papers like *Social-Demokraten*, which was particularly critical of the decision by the Finnish authorities to institute official bans on communist activity as part of their campaign against the radical Left in August 1923. The political trials of communists held at the same time were also criticised in the Swedish social democratic and left-wing press. Moral support was widely forthcoming for Georg Branting, who

269. See Werner Söderhjelm's report of 14.6.1928 to the Foreign Ministry in Helsinki (UM 5 C 2).

served as a defence lawyer in the political trials held in 1924 and who also published a critical pamphlet on his experiences.[270] Developments indicating the strengthening of moderate parliamentary democratic policies within the labour movement in Finland were greeted with satisfaction. Among Finnish conservative figures, Mannerheim remained the subject of continued criticism and suspicion.

Despite the relative coolness of much of Swedish opinion towards Finland, there were nevertheless some sections of opinion which continued to be especially favourably disposed towards Finland, but these were quite limited in extent. Among these was the group centred around the Samfundet Sverige-Finland association, led by General Ernst Linder and Sven Palme, an organisation which had been prominent in advocating providing Swedish aid to the White army in Finland during 1918. The views and attitudes of those associated with this organisation were nevertheless distant from those directly responsible for shaping Sweden's official policy towards Finland. They maintained their attachment to the White cause all the same, however, and in 1928, as part of their wider attempt to gain recognition for Sweden's part in helping the White forces' struggle ten years previously, sponsored a number of publications on the theme to commemorate the anniversary of the Civil War.[271] Sympathies with the Finnish authorities' struggle against the Left, and Finland's stance towards the Soviet Union, were also evident to a limited extent within the Swedish army. Some contact was established by the Swedish High Command from the mid-1920s onwards with the Finnish General Staff, largely on intelligence questions. A number of groups within the Swedish officer corps also debated the possibility of developing a wider measure of military cooperation between the two countries' armed forces to prepare for what was seen as possible future military activity by the Soviet Union.[272]

Against the background provided by the activities of these conservative groups, which often occupied a surprisingly visible

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270. See Georg Branting's pamphlet 'Rättvisan i Finland. Några dokument med kommentarer'. Also Soc-Dem 7.8., 7.12.1923.
271. See A. Douglas: Kriget i Finland 1918 (Stockholm 1928); Den svenska insatsen i Finlands frihetskrig (Stockholm 1928).
272. Ehrensvärd 1966, pp. 74—5.

place in Swedish society, despite the restricted numbers of those involved, Sweden's official foreign policy towards Finland, with its stress on maintaining good neighbourly relations but at the same time carefully avoiding over-close bilateral commitments, often seemed to slip from view. Stability above all else was perhaps the virtue official policy-makers in Sweden wanted Finland most to acquire, one which would see Finland avoiding any reattempt to develop a close association with the Baltic countries and yet maintaining correct relations with the Soviet Union.

From the German perspective, the Finland that emerged during the 1920s tended to be seen in relatively positive terms as a rapidly developing Scandinavian country firmly in the Western sphere. Independent Finland had first come to major prominence in Germany in the spring of 1918, with the dispatch of German forces under General von der Goltz to assist the White army in the Civil War. Participation in the latter conflict had been associated in many German minds with the more general Western struggle against the spread of Bolshevism, a fact which also contributed to creating and maintaining a stereotyped and essentially conservative view of Finnish politics. The pattern of Finland's domestic politics during the 1920s, with its numerous changes of government and shifting political allegiances, was sufficiently distant to the average German that it proved only of interest to those otherwise interested in Finnish affairs. Finnish politics, as a result, remained largely anonymous to the German public, and few Finnish political names were known in Germany. An exception to this general rule, however, was Mannerheim, who was remembered for his links with the White Russian cause and for the leading role he had played in the early months of Finnish independence.

German foreign policy thinking for much of the 1920s focused on the problems of redeveloping relations with the major Western powers and recovering from the setbacks imposed by the German defeat. The problems surrounding compliance with the terms of the Versailles agreement were a major concern. Interest in the eastern half of Europe was largely limited to hopes of possible future adjustments to Germany's eastern borders, and did not really extend to including any clear ideas on developing relations

on a wider scale with countries in the region. Exceptions to this were the Soviet Union and Poland, both of which were the objects of some considerable German interest. Germany signed the Rapallo Pact with the Soviet Union in 1922.

In the wake of the closer diplomatic ties which developed between Berlin and Moscow in the 1920s, something of a shadow fell over the Baltic states and, to an extent, Finland as well, in terms of the latter's security policy options. With German interest firmly concentrated along the Russo-German axis, Finland came to occupy a position of marginal importance in German priorities.[273] Despite her new independent status, Finland actually declined in significance in many respects in German eyes during the post-war years, to much the same level as she had occupied prior to 1914. Germany appears to have lacked any definite policy towards Finland at this stage, above and beyond a general desire to maintain cordial relations with what was seen as a friendly country. Even if Finland failed to interest those in the German Foreign Ministry, she did nevertheless play quite a significant role in German foreign trade. This fact owed its origin to the established trade relations between the two countries which had been developed in the pre-war period, and to the importance which Baltic trade came to assume for Germany during the 1920s at a time when the terms of the Versailles peace restricted the size of German merchant ships, effectively preventing Germany from engaging in ocean-going trade.

Variations in attitudes among the Western powers towards independent Finland during the 1920s were for the most part relatively minor, although as the decade wore on some differences did begin to emerge between the British and French positions. Finland's earlier pro-German foreign policy during 1918 had left an element of caution towards Finland in the minds of political leaders in both France and Britain, which in the case of France was particularly slow to dissipate. The adverse effect of Finland's past pro-German sympathies on Western opinion was also reinforced by what appeared, in the eyes of a number of Western figures, to be the aggressive expansionism which had characterised Finnish

273. Ilvessalo 1959, pp. 104—9, 125.

policies over intervention in East Karelia and in the dispute with Sweden over the Åland Islands.[274] The reserved stand adopted towards Finland by government circles in London and Paris, and also to some extent within the League of Nations, had a knock-on effect in shaping attitudes towards Finland in a number of other countries. Finland, in common with many of the other new states which had been born out of the war, was implicitly criticised for her slowness in adapting to the post-war European balance of power. Compared to countries such as Poland and Yugoslavia, Finland was nevertheless generally considered a less problematic case. Among the newly-independent states of the Baltic region, Finland represented a relatively clear-cut geographical and national entity, a fact appreciated in both London and Paris. In this sense, Finland was seen as standing in something of an intermediary position, between Scandinavia on the one hand and the Baltic republics on the other. Looked at in terms of the region's relation to Russia, a viewpoint particularly favoured in post-war French thinking during the early 1920s, although less so later, Finland was also nevertheless considered as essentially belonging to the Baltic regional grouping. Finland's long national traditions, together with the continuity and stable development of the country's political infrastructure, marred only by the set-back caused by the Civil War, and history of close association with Scandinavia, served all the same to anchor the country firmly within the Nordic sphere in the minds of many in the West.

Finland's essentially positive political image in the West was steadily consolidated during the course of the 1920s, despite the relative uneventfullness of Finnish political life during the decade, in terms of issues of interest to observers in Western Europe, compared to the upheavals of previous years. This latter fact was reflected in the steep reduction of coverage of news about Finland which took place in the leading British and French papers from the period of Ståhlberg's presidency onwards.[275]

Conditions in Finland in this regard contrasted strongly with Western impressions of those in a number of other newly-inde-

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274. Paasivirta 1969, pp. 19—20.

275. In its coverage of Finland, *The Times* tended to concentrate on stories relating to Russia or relations between Finland and the Baltic republics rather than domestic Finnish issues. See for ex. *The Times* 31.10.1929.

pendent European states. Following the rise to power of dictatorships in Lithuania and Poland in the mid-1920s, Finland and Czechoslovakia came to be seen by many Western politicians as perhaps the best examples among the new European states of the successful implementation of liberal, democratic ideals. Czechoslovakia's position as a model was, it is true, overshadowed to some extent by her difficult minority nationality problems. The attention of observers in Western and Central Europe was especially drawn to the fact that, despite their identification with the losing side in the Civil War, the Social Democrats were nevertheless able to form a minority government in 1926. This served to strengthen the steadily growing view abroad that internal conflicts and tensions in Finland were well on the way to being resolved.[276] Compared to a country like Hungary, which had experienced broadly similar political upheavals in the final stages of the First World War and which during the 1920s came under the rule of the authoritarian Horthy régime, the situation in Finland appeared to give every cause for optimism.

The general weakening in the position and influence of Russia and Germany in the Baltic area, which took place in the aftermath of the First World War, allowed Britain to exert more influence in the area. Continued access to the Baltic for British warships and the maintenance of the demilitarised status of the Åland Islands were dominant issues for Britain. While Finland's independent status was considered largely secure and the overall situation in the Baltic similarly stabilised, Foreign Office circles remained decidedly less sanguine about the position and future of the three Baltic republics. In discussions with Finnish diplomats, clear doubts were expressed about the long-term viability of these countries' independence. Finland, as a result, was advised to avoid over-close contact or involvement with them.[277]

As long as the possibility of Western-backed intervention had remained open, France had had a general interest in all the border states along Russia's western frontier, including Finland, but when this passed the focus of French security policy interest narrowed in Eastern Europe. Poland emerged as the main focus of French

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276. *The Times* 13.12.1926; *Le Temps* 13.12.1926; *Frankfurter Zeitung* 13.12., 15.12.1926; *Vorwärts* 16.12.1926.
277. O. Donner 1926, pp. 145—9.

attention and as the northernmost pillar in the French alliance system introduced in the region. Like Britain, France was also interested in maintaining maritime access to the Baltic, but mainly only as a means of safeguarding a route to allow assistance to Poland in the event of an international crisis, particularly one sparked off by renewed German military activity. When the question of the signing of a military agreement between Finland, Poland, Estonia and Latvia came up in the early spring of 1922, Poland was careful to sound out beforehand the opinions of her French ally to any such agreement. Marshal Foch's statement, given to the Polish General Staff on 4 March in response to Polish enquiries, stressed France's view that Poland should not agree to any military commitment likely to undermine her military preparedness to counter any threat from Germany. Foch's view was that Poland would be unlikely to benefit from any border state alliance and that she would be well advised to negotiate no more than a bilateral agreement with Finland covering political cooperation on matters relating to the Soviet Union.[278] French hostility to a wider military linkage between the Baltic countries would appear to have led to the reluctance of the Polish negotiators at the meeting of border state ministers held in Warsaw in mid-March 1922 to consider the possibility of a military agreement, and their preference instead for a purely political agreement.

The Scandinavian countries, Finland included, were ultimately largely peripheral to French interests and concerns, as was France to Scandinavia. The widespread fear of Germany felt in France during the 1920s nevertheless sometimes caused French attention to be drawn to events in Finland, in as much as they related, even distantly, to German issues. French diplomats in Helsinki kept a close watch on the state of Finnish-German relations. The negative reactions in Finland to the occupation of the Rhineland by French forces, the visit of General von Goltz to Helsinki, and the indications of possible military contacts between the Finnish and German armies were all carefully followed by the French Embassy in Helsinki.[279]

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278. See Marshal Foch's memorandum of 4.3.1922 to the French Foreign Ministry (AAEF, Finlande 16).
279. See the reports of the French envoy in Helsinki to Paris dated 25.3.1923, 25.3.1925 and 12.12.1925 (AAEF, Finlande 16, 17).

Finland's steadily expanding presence on Western markets in the post-1919 period gave the country a relatively distinct profile in the field of international commerce. Compared to Sweden and Norway, both of whose timber resources had been significantly depleted as a result of earlier industrial exploitation, Finland tended to be seen by those involved in the international timber and paper trade as virtually virgin territory. Coupled with Russia's slow re-emergence as a timber exporter on the Western market, which only really got under way in 1924, this served to improve Finland's position as a potential trading partner in the eyes of a significant section of the business community in Western Europe. Overall, Finland was considered by Western industrialists and politicians alike, a peripheral but essentially viable, progressive small state.

Beyond political and commercial issues, there was only a minimal level of knowledge and interest in Britain and France concerning other aspects of Finnish society, such as literature and the arts. One of the main limiting factors was Finland's small size and the modest scale of her input into the mainstream of European culture, which often led to Finland being written off as a cultural backwater with little to contribute to the major European countries. The language barrier, working in both directions, only reinforced this isolation. The efforts that were made to improve European awareness of Finland and to increase the flow of information, both from Finland to Europe and from the latter to Finland, were not helped by the fact that Sweden and Swedish-speaking circles in Finland enjoyed an influential, if not at times dominating role in mediating these contacts. This often resulted in a situation in which the Western European audience was often significantly more aware of Finland and Finnish affairs as reflected in the activities of the country's Swedish-speaking minority, than through those of Finnish-speaking Finland. Information about the latter tended to find its way abroad on a much more sporadic basis. This imbalance in the exposure of the two linguistic groups abroad did, however, increasingly even itself out as time went on.

Of the new independent states with which Finland had any significant dealings during the 1920s, Poland was particularly prominent during the early part of the decade. Under Pilsudsky, Poland embarked on a policy aimed at creating a powerful Polish

state along the lines of the Greater Poland which had existed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, capable of a significant measure of independence from both Russia and Germany and linked to a chain of friendly allied states, over which Poland exercised some measure of political influence. By creating a corridor, which was ultimately envisaged as stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea, it was believed that Poland would be able to hamper closer future contacts between Russia and Germany, or, at a minimum, restrict and neutralise any negative effects they might have on the Polish position.[280] It was also believed that a powerful Poland would be an attractive ally to France in Eastern Europe.

The pattern of events in the immediate post-war years, including the Polish withdrawal from their occupation of Kiev in the summer of 1920 and the series of Polish reverses culminating in the Red Army offensive against Warsaw, repulsed with the help of French military advisers, marked a significant set-back to Poland's grand policy plans, even despite the fact that Poland acquired non-Polish territory in the East at the Riga Peace of 1921. The failure of the Warsaw agreement to be ratified by its various signatories during the spring of 1922, together with Estonia's and Latvia's efforts to disengage themselves from too close an association with the Polish sphere of influence, also served to limit the expansion of Polish influence northwards. Although the Polish resolve to maintain an active foreign policy role and pursue an independent line towards the great powers remained, the scale of the country's foreign policy problems served in the long run to weaken her potential for influencing other countries in the Baltic region, including Finland, during the 1920s.

Hungarian interest in Finland developed appreciably in the post-war period, spurred not only by the sense of shared cultural inheritance linking the two countries, but also by the fact of Hungary's new political position and, above all, her deepening sense of isolation following the Peace of Trianon. Far from clutching solely to the straw held out by identification with the Finno-Ugrian inheritance and the ethnic solidarity it promised, however, there was an attempt to develop a dual cultural inheri-

280. Korzek 1979, pp. 435—56.

tance theory. Eventually coming to possess the stamp of semi-official approval, this stressed the dual nature of Hungary's historical and cultural affiliations, embracing the Turkic-Tartar peoples, as well as the Finno-Ugrian linguistic and cultural grouping.[281] Despite the interest felt in Hungary towards Finland, it proved difficult for Hungary to develop contacts at the political and foreign policy levels, and links between the two countries ultimately tended to concentrate themselves in the field of literature and the arts.

Estonia, in contrast, found in Finland her closest neighbour. Finland had played a direct part in Estonia's gaining of independence through the volunteers sent to assist nationalist forces. Hopes in certain sections of Estonian opinion had initially focused on the possibility of the establishment of a political federation between Finland and Estonia, before events made all-out national independence a more attractive and viable option.[282] Cut off linguistically from her Baltic neighbours to the south, Estonia found in Finland, a country owing allegiance to the same shared cultural background, a useful point of cultural reference and a source of ideas and influence in a wide variety of fields. For Finland, the relationship was ultimately more distant.

Soviet attitudes towards Finland have to be seen against the background of the new foreign policy developed by the Soviet leadership. This was shaped not only by the requirements of communist ideology, but also by the turbulent period following the October Revolution and the deep impact it had on Soviet society and opinion. Western intervention in events within Russia and the isolation of Soviet Russia during its first years of existence inevitably coloured the development of foreign policy ideas and planning. The signing of a peace with Finland at Tartu in 1920 was an important achievement in Soviet eyes, marking a significant stage on the way to securing the overall security of the Soviet Union's western border and towards freeing the country from isolation, and creating a viable defensive buffer zone.[283]

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281. Gragger 1921, pp. 157—60.
282. Zetterberg 1977, pp. 84—100.
283. Fischer 1951, p. 256; Kennan 1961, pp. 171—2.

Finland's status as a new independent state, however, was viewed with some suspicion and misgiving by the Soviet government during the early years of independence. Finland's historical links with Germany and the role assumed by German forces during the Finnish Civil War of 1918 played a prominent part among these concerns. Although Finland had not participated in Western intervention, her essentially hostile attitude to Soviet interests had been made plain in Soviet eyes through her enthusiasm for expansionist policies directed towards East Karelia and her backing of unofficial military intervention in the area. All of this undoubtedly contributed to reinforcing the view, typical of the Soviet position throughout this period, that the policies followed by small states in general, Finland included, were determined in large part by outside forces and that the independence they might claim for their actions was largely illusory.[284] With regard to Finland, Soviet suspicions during the 1920s focused particularly on British influence and Finland's economic dependence on Britain as a major trading partner. An unwelcome dependence on the Western great powers was also detected by Moscow in the policies followed by the Baltic countries.

Soviet fears concentrated on the possible expansion of the West's potential to isolate the Soviet Union, particularly through the activities of the League of Nations and exploitation of the Locarno Pact. By offering non-aggression treaties to its western neighbours, the Soviet Union hoped to be able to reduce to a minimum the West's potential for joint action directed against Soviet interests. At base, the overall Soviet position on foreign and security policy issues was ultimately defensive rather than aggressive, although for ideological reasons and largely as a result of the role played by Comintern, Soviet intentions were typically seen in the West as, for the most part, actively hostile. In their policy and attitude towards Finland, the Soviet authorities were motivated by a desire to see Finland avoid close ties with the Baltic countries and, above all, with Poland.[285]

The failure of the Left in the Finnish Civil War, together with the various interpretations put on this, also powerfully shaped the

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284. Paasivirta 1969, p. 22.
285. Korhonen I 1966, pp. 72—3, 112, 123—5.

overall nature of Soviet views of Finland. The long-term potential of Finland's parliamentary system to meet the challenges of independence and the radical Left became the source of much Soviet speculation as the 1920s wore on. The Finnish Socialist Workers' Party, with its avowedly revolutionary ideals, enjoyed a greater measure of popular support than any of the equivalent parties active in the Soviet Union's other western neighbours. Added to this, a significant group of Finnish emigré communists were also active in Leningrad and Moscow. These latter, together with their Hungarian emigré colleagues, were the only non-Russians within Russia to have had experience of revolution in their own countries. This no doubt fed Russian hopes of a future possible change of government, resulting in one more amenable to Russian interests one day taking place.[286]

Given the small scale of Soviet foreign trade during the 1920s and the country's low purchasing power, it was inevitable that the level of Finnish-Soviet trade during the period should also have been modest. Soviet commercial interest during the NEP period, and even more so during the course of the first five-year plan, focused on negotiating trade agreements with the larger European economies capable of satisfying Soviet requirements in such areas as capital goods, rather than on developing links with the smaller European countries. While the Baltic republics, and the Latvian capital, Riga, in particular, came to occupy an important position as through-shipping areas for trade between Soviet Russia and the West, the fact of Finland's more northerly geographical position prevented the latter from developing into a similar bridge for Soviet exports. The modest scale of the Finnish economy and domestic market also militated against encouraging any significant Soviet economic initiative. The most Soviet planners probably envisaged from Soviet-Finnish trade was a limited border trade embracing the Leningrad area.

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286. Paasivirta 1969, pp. 22—3.

VI Finland During the Tense Depression Years of the Early 1930s

1. The changing face of world politics and the spread of the international recession

The closing years of the 1920s were marked by a number of attempts, many of them emanating from the League of Nations, aimed at underpinning the peaceful future development of Europe and eliminating the remaining tensions left by the Great War. Despite the efforts that were made, little of substance was achieved on the basic issue of reducing tension and creating the basis for a more stable and secure international order, in spite of the relative calm which had reigned in Europe for much of the decade and which had otherwise contributed to encouraging a greater mood of optimism. No real progress in developing collective security in Europe, or in erecting credible barriers against possible future outbreaks of international aggression, proved forthcoming following the failure of the 1924 Geneva protocol to be widely ratified. The Kellogg-Briand Pact initiative proposed in 1928, condemning the use of violent means in the resolution of disputes, lacked any means of enforcement and amounted in the final analysis to little more than a declaration of good intentions, rather than any concrete step towards guaranteeing peaceful coexistence. European politics continued to be dominated by the seemingly intractable division existing between the victors and the defeated, between those countries which had benefited from the peace

treaties imposed at the end of the First World War and those which, as defeated countries, had suffered significant losses as a result of the peace, or those, like Italy, whose territorial and political aspirations had, despite their wartime allegiance to the Allies, nevertheless failed to be fulfilled. This split was reflected in the pattern of tension and friction which came to characterise relations between those countries committed to preserving the post-war status quo and those determined to redress what they saw as the imbalance in European relations institutionalised in the post-1918 division of power.[1]

These tensions were well illustrated in the development of Franco-German relations during the latter half of the 1920s. The latter were dominated by the two partially interrelated questions of reparations and Germany's economic and political recovery. In failing to stipulate the final amount Germany was to pay in reparations, the 1924 Dawes Plan proved the source of persistent dispute between the two countries. Similar friction was generated by the efforts of Germany's long-time Foreign Minister, Gustav Stresemann, to work for the revision of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles and of a number of the other restrictive arrangements imposed on Germany after the war. It took until virtually the end of the decade to see any real progress on reducing Franco-German tension. The agreement reached between Germany and the Western powers in June 1930, on the basis of the Young Plan, on the reparations payments question, bringing with it a number of concessions to German interests and the ending of the Allied occupation of the Rhineland five years ahead of schedule, marked something of a reconciliation in relations between the West and Germany, and an easing of tension in Western Europe as a whole.[2] This essentially positive development came to be overshadowed, however, by the dramatic upheaval in the Western economic world set in motion by the crash on the New York Stock Exchange in October 1929.

The period leading up to the crash had, ironically, been one of powerful economic growth in the Western world, during which overall industrial production in Europe, excluding the Soviet

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1. Renouvin VII 1957, pp. 340—6; Marks 1979, pp. 100—1.
2. Carr 1973, pp. 126—8; Hiden 1977, pp. 58—9.

Union, had risen some 20–25% between 1925 and 1929, and that in Germany 10–20% above 1913 levels. The wide-ranging economic optimism typical of the time in Western Europe drew much of its inspiration from the dynamic recovery which had got under way in the immediate post-war period and the hopes this aroused of overcoming the after-effects of the First World War. The stabilisation of the international currency market and the widespread adoption of the gold standard in the mid-1920s had contributed to encouraging the expansion of international trade. Parallel to these developments, however, Europe had become increasingly economically tied to the United States and to fluctuations in the American economy as a result of the scale of the loans contracted with America, both during the war years and after. Countries affected included America's wartime allies anxious to reconstruct their war-torn economies, Germany burdened with heavy reparations payments, together with Germany's wartime allies, as well as many of the new independent countries, such as Finland.[3]

A foretaste of the recession to come was provided by the extensive international agricultural crisis, caused by steep falls in agricultural commodity prices spurred by over-production, which set in from 1928 onwards, severely affecting the farming populations of many East European countries and much of Latin America and Australia.[4] It was the upswing in industrial production which had been instrumental in revitalising the Western world's international economy, together with the upward price spiral it had generated, however, which was to be the main factor behind the crash itself. As a result of the close inter-relationship of international trade and financial markets that had developed, the effects of the American crash, far from being restricted to the North American market, quickly extended to Europe. The rush by American banks to foreclose on their European loans in the wake of the collapse on Wall Street, followed by the various large-scale movements of capital which took place within the European area itself, rapidly and seriously undermined the economies of many European countries, paving the way for a whole series of national

3. Montgomery 1954, p. 175—7.
4. Baumont 1967, p. 396; Grouzet 1969, pp. 114—5; Rück 1945, p. 259.

currency crises. The general currency upheaval in Europe, further fuelled by the financial upsets which developed in Austria, and which began to bite in earnest from the summer of 1931 onwards, led to Britain's decision to leave the gold standard on 21 September and to devalue sterling's international value by 30%. Britain's move was followed by a number of other countries in Northern Europe, which followed suit in devaluing their currencies and abandoning the gold standard.[5]

It did not take long for the widespread recession set in train by the New York debacle to be felt in the shape of a sharp decline in the level of industrial output in the United States and the industrialised countries of Western Europe.[6] The reduction in German production between June 1929 and July 1932, for example, amounted to some 38%. Linked to this fall-off in output there was a general decline in prices and wages, which in turn contributed to a drop in overall purchasing power. Unemployment grew dramatically, rising in the United States to a figure of 11.4 million in 1932 and in Germany in mid-1931 to over 5 million, and in Britain in January 1931 to 2.6 million.[7] Among the Western countries, only France was able to avoid the worst effects of this development, with her unemployment statistics showing only a mild increase over the same period. Britain too, where wage levels never fell significantly, managed to escape some of the problems affecting her neighbours.[8] The combined effects of the dislocations affecting the industrial and agricultural sectors in much of Europe also inevitably resulted in a major reduction in the scale of the region's foreign trade from what it had been in the peak years of the late 1920s.

The recession had a particularly severe effect on the German economy, which during the pre-1929 boom years had experienced a period of extensive expansion, funded largely by injections of foreign and particularly American loan capital. 1927 and 1928 had seen Germany contract foreign loans to a value five times that of the country's war reparations payments. Based as the German

5. Baumont 1967, pp. 396—7; Grouzet 1969, pp. 111—2.
6. Lundberg 1953, p. 37.
7. Grouzet 1969, pp. 114, 116; Wood 1965, p. 413.
8. Grouzet 1969, pp. 115—6.

economic recovery thus was, in large measure, on an essentially insecure foundation and prone to fluctuations in the international money markets, the withdrawal of American capital which began in the autumn of 1929 had a disastrous effect on German economic fortunes. The sharp fall which took place in German economic output and the parallel rapid rise in unemployment which followed made it virtually impossible for the German authorities to keep a hold over the country's balance of payments, which in any case had only been kept in some sort of order with difficulty prior to the slump.[9] Germany's position became only more fraught following the steady worsening of domestic stability which took place from the autumn of 1930 onwards, until events finally led in January 1933 to Hitler's National Socialists being accepted into government.

Despite the international nature of the depression ushered in by the 1929 New York crash, surprisingly little was achieved in the area of international cooperation to combat its impact on the world economy. Among the few exceptions to this were the efforts of the three Scandinavian countries, which established the Oslo group in 1930, and those of Belgium and Holland, which held extensive joint talks on economic issues and ways of coordinating their response to the crisis, and those of the Commonwealth nations, which discussed the possibility of setting up a common customs union at their economic conference held in Ottawa in 1932. The countries in the Danube basin, however, failed in their attempt in August 1930 to establish an European pricing agreement for agricultural products designed to protect European agricultural producers from American competition.[10] For its part, the United States was forced in 1931, as a result of the continuing European economic crisis, to grant its European debtor nations a year-long moratorium on repayments of their loans held with American banks. As part of a joint effort to stem the German economic slide and to finally resolve the German war reparations question, an agreement was drawn up in Lucerne in July 1932, on the basis of the earlier Young Plan, limiting further German reparations commitments to no more than a single payment of 150 million

9. Montgomery 1954, pp. 208—14.
10. Wood 1965, p. 413; Marks 1979, p. 93.

pounds.[11] With little sign of any let-up in the recession, however, one European country after another decided that it had no option but to terminate its loan agreements with the United States. By 1933, Finland remained the only European country which continued its annual repayments on its loan obligations to the US. This breakdown was only compounded by events at the world economic conference held in London in June 1933, which represented something of a peak in the series of failures to find a common response to the slump, eventually breaking up with nothing of significant import achieved.[12]

In contrast to events in the Western economies, developments in the Soviet economy had followed their own largely independent course. The country's first five-year plan was introduced in 1929. This embraced an ambitious programme aimed at extensive industrialisation across the whole breadth of the country and, in particular, the creation of a viable heavy industrial base and communications network. The economic thinking behind the five-year plan structure depended on keeping consumption and living standards at a low level to release capital to fund the country's industrialisation programme. Parallel to this intensive programme of industrialisation, a system of collective agricultural production was also introduced to replace the system of smallholding-dominated production, based on private land ownership, which had been accepted as part of the earlier compromise NEP policy. The large-scale economic restructuring this involved led to a powerful concentration of power and control at the centre and, by extension, in that held by the party secretary, Joseph Stalin. In line with this increasingly centralised planning infrastructure, the emphasis on ideological issues also deepened, accompanied by a renewed campaign against religious belief and the influence of the Church.[13]

While developments in the East during the early years of the 1930s saw an increasing reliance on an integrated, centrally-coordinated economic and social base, those in Western Europe continued to be typified by a fragmented approach to the challenge

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11. Carr 1973, pp. 141, 147.
12. Ibid., pp. 149—50; Baumont 1967, p. 421.
13. Carr 1979, pp. 164—72; Deutscher 1978, pp. 237, 275, 294—6.

of countering the negative effects of the economic slump. There was little desire or determination, at least among the major economies of the region, for developing a commonly-agreed set of responses to the problems facing the Western market. Following the seeming failure of free market forces to offer any adequate remedy for the effects of the recession, many governments abandoned the bulk of their earlier laissez-faire ideas and instead embarked on policies of introducing high import tariffs to protect their domestic industries and agricultures, combined with various systems of export support and devaluations of their currencies. Within a relatively short space of time, the whole notion of free trade was virtually completely abandoned and replaced by protectionism, with the result that the international economy became increasingly destabilised and fragmented into a collection of protectionist national economies dominated, to a great or lesser extent, by attempts to develop economic self-sufficiency.

This spread of protectionist philosophy was paralleled in many countries affected by the depression by a growing level of political concern and discussion surrounding nationalist issues and questions of how best to defend national interests and maintain national cohesion against a background of increasing international uncertainty. Whilst this development was typical of a number of European states, it was particularly prominent in Germany and in the newly-independent countries of Eastern and Central Europe, many of which had suffered from political and economic instability throughout their post-war independence. This growth in nationalist attitudes brought increasingly loud demands for the introduction of new nationalist-based governments. The ideals of democracy and parliamentary government, which had previously enjoyed a wide measure of respect and currency in the post-Versailles world, began to be increasingly questioned, and their supporters forced on to the defensive. The growing influence of the great powers in European affairs and the reduction in the overall freedom of manoeuvre available to the small states of the region represented additional related problems.

In an attempt to stem the worst effects of the recession, many governments in Western Europe, both those of the parliamentary democracies and the authoritarian dictatorships in the region, were forced to intervene in economic issues to a degree previously unprecedented in peacetime. The bulk of these interventionist

policies relied on traditional liberal economic ideas and were characterised by a dependence on measures to reduce overall levels of wages and prices. In Germany, the deflationary economic policies introduced by Brüning's government from 1930 onwards were followed, and particularly after Hitler's rise to power in 1933, by tight regulation of the economy, aimed at guaranteeing Germany a greater measure of economic self-sufficiency and concentrating trading on a clearing basis. Attention generally tended to be focused on attempting to save the established economic system, rather than on any efforts to formulate new types of economic initiative. Per Albin Hansson's Social Democrat government in Sweden concentrated much of its efforts, in addition to those directed at underpinning the country's export effort, on an extensive programme of public works, designed to maintain consumption levels and stimulate economic activity in the private sector and manufacturing industry. America too opted for an interventionist style of government. Roosevelt's New Deal programme, instituted after he entered office in 1933, allowed for a substantial federal government involvement in the American economy, combined with wide-scale reform of the fiscal system. The thinking behind the New Deal had a powerful influence on European attitudes towards ways of combating the recession and reinvigorating Western economies, paralleling that enjoyed by John Maynard Keynes' theories on public deficit spending.

Much of Europe nevertheless remained divided and at a loss as to how to respond to the failure of the free market system to react to a recession of its own making, following the undermining of confidence in traditional solutions. Many politicians were hampered by their resistance to the whole notion of state intervention in economic issues. Given the divergence of opinion as to the most effective approach to the problem, the major difficulty facing many of the parliamentary democracies crystallised around the problem of uniting sufficient political forces around a minimum programme. Many social democratic parties found themselves in the thankless position of having to come to terms with compromise economic solutions in order to maintain public credibility in the multiparty system. The importance of this task was only highlighted by the increasing power being gained by the Right and the mounting attacks being made by right-wing parties, both in and out of power, not only against the threat of

international Marxism, but also against what was seen as the ineffectiveness and lack-lustre performance of liberal democracy in tackling the economic challenge represented by the recession.

For all the economic problems affecting the West, there was no real let-up in the level of criticism directed against the Soviet Union and the Communist movement by the majority of non-socialist and social democratic parties throughout Europe. Particular objects of criticism were Stalin's increasingly dictatorial style of leadership, collectivisation and the programme of agricultural reorganisation instituted under the five-year plans, and the revived campaign against the Church. Attention was also drawn to the low standard of living then typical of conditions in the Soviet Union. It was difficult to ignore the fact, however, that despite the slump affecting the Western world, the Soviet Union, in the midst of its extensive programme of economic construction, had managed to avoid the scourge of unemployment.

The imminent prospect of the capitalist world entering a period of major upheaval had been widely discussed at the sixth congress of Comintern held in 1928. The emphasis given to the imminence of the capitalist collapse, together with a number of other factors, had contributed to a hardening of the ideological line pursued by Comintern and an increased emphasis on the need for an uncompromising struggle against social democratic parties. National communist parties were advised to prepare for possible revolutionary action. A direct consequence of this increasing shift towards expectation of impending radical change in the West were the purges, directed against eliminating what were seen as rightist elements, instituted in a number of national communist and affiliated parties.[14]

In addition to encouraging the spread of nationalist thinking in various parts of Europe, the deepening of the international recession also triggered a general decline, both in Europe and elsewhere, in the level of optimism regarding the possibility of maintaining peace. This was particularly evident in the increased doubts which came to be voiced about the League of Nations and its role as a peacemaker. The Japanese occupation of Manchuria in September 1931, although only of limited consequence to the

14. Borkenau 1938, pp. 337—43, 346—9.

outside world, represented a major setback to attempts to consolidate peaceful international development and a challenge to the authority of the League of Nations. The seeming inability of the League to function as an effective international forum in working towards its avowed aims, such as disarmament, was also reinforced in the eyes of its critics by the small measure of progress made by the special disarmament committee set up by the League in 1927.

The upheavals on the international scene in the years that had followed its setting-up had, however, through no fault of the League itself, served to undermine the credibility of all ideas aimed at some measure of arms reduction, and contributed to reinforcing resistance to any proposals which could be interpreted as potentially weakening the national defence capabilities of individual member states. As increasing criticism and doubts began to be expressed about the continued viability of the peace treaties concluded at the conclusion of the First World War, so further demands came to be heard calling for their amendment. The sharp splits within the international community over security questions, combined with the lack of overall international confidence, only further reduced the room for manoeuvre allowed the specially-convened disarmament conference held between 1932 and 1933. The failure of the conference to produce any solid results, together with the departure of Germany and Japan from the League in 1933, pointed to the emergence of a new stage in international politics.[15]

2. The rise of the Finnish Right

The end of the 1920s witnessed a marked increase in political activity at both extremes of the political spectrum, a development which came to seriously undermine the pattern of a distinct, if modest shift towards the Centre which had been observed within Finnish society during the earlier part of the decade. Within the labour movement, this change was most prominent in the trade unions, highlighted by the victory of the radical Left at the SAJ

15. Carr 1973, pp. 175—88.

conference held at the beginning of 1929, aided by the renewed activities of the Finnish Communist Party, following the new, more aggressive policy adopted by Comintern in 1928. The Left's victory brought the withdrawal of the Social Democrats from the increasingly radical and uncompromising SAJ, and led to their establishing their own central federation. The Social Democrats were accompanied in their departure by a separate group of independently-minded radical trade union activists, who feared that the uncompromising stance taken by the Communists would lead to the status of the movement being badly undermined.[16]

The parallel rise of radical influence on the Right owed its origins to an upswing in fears among conservative circles at what was seen as the increased threat to society posed by the communist-inspired Left, and to the build-up of conservative unease and dissatisfaction with the general trend of developments in Finnish politics and society, which had steadily taken place since the election of Ståhlberg as President and the signing of the Tartu Peace. Many of those who had taken an active part on the White side during the spring of 1918, and yet had failed to gain what they considered positions commensurate with their abilities, were particularly bitter. Their bitterness nevertheless went beyond that of simple personal rancour, extending to embrace a more deep-rooted disappointment and disaffection with the whole fabric of the republican form of government and pattern of post-independence politics, which were seen as having little in common with the ideals they had fought for in the Civil War. Particular discontent was felt with the series of compromises seen as having been taken on many central questions affecting the country's future, and the apparent ease with which the Left, despite its defeat in the Civil War, was now allowed access to power and influence. It was from among this section of right-wing opinion that an increasing number of calls came to be heard for a final settling of accounts with those who continued to remain dedicated to the overthrow of society, and the completion of what had been left undone during the Civil War. These calls bore a disturbing similarity to those made a decade earlier by the more

16. Hodgson 1967, pp. 122—33; Haataja et al 1976, pp. 163—5; Virtanen 1983, pp. 13—24; *Suomen Työmies* 1.—6.1930; Hugo Ahokanta 16.12.1970.

extreme supporters of the rough justice meted out against the Red rebels in the wake of the Civil War.[17]

The opening shot in the confrontation which developed between Right and Left took place at the end of November 1929 in Lapua, a small rural community in Ostrobothnia, at a gathering organised by the communist youth movement, which developed into a fracas between those attending and elements of the conservative local population. This symbolic disturbance, minor as it was, served to unite those strands of increasingly aggressive conservative opinion, which had up until then lacked a shared cause, and led to the emergence of what became known as the Lapua movement and the setting-up of the Suomen Lukko organisation in March 1930 to coordinate a new, more forceful struggle against communism.

From the beginning, however, the anti-communist movement contained two distinctive wings, which soon found themselves split over appropriate means to achieve their goal, and eventually over the very nature of that goal. The more moderate of the two, which reflected the wider aspirations of a significant proportion of non-socialist opinion, focused on the need to maintain law and order and social stability, and prevent outbreaks of communist-inspired challenges to authority. The more extreme faction, identified with figures such as Vihtori Kosola, the self-styled leader of the Lapua movement, favoured more openly violent means, including the kidnapping of opponents and the exploitation of extensive extra-parliamentary pressure. A peak in the activities of the latter grouping was reached in the peasants' march on Helsinki organised at the beginning of July 1930, in which some 12,000 marchers took part in support of demands for the banning of all communist activity.

Shortly prior to this, in mid-June, the government approved a measure, issued in the name of maintaining social stability, banning the publication of all newspapers and magazines by the radical Left, including the Communists. The four-party government headed by Svinhufvud, a popular figure with the Right, which took office in July replacing Kallio's narrower coalition, presented Parliament with a legislative package designed to

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17. E. W. Juva II 1961, pp. 364—81; Wahlbäck 1968, pp. 124—9; *Aktivisti* 1.5., 15.5., 1.6.1930.

outlaw communism altogether. This failed to win approval, however, and had to be postponed following the government's inability, as a result of Social Democrat opposition, to guarantee it the five-sixths majority needed. The government's victory in the elections called in the wake of the bill's rejection ensured that it was approved at the beginning of November by the new Parliament, with the majority necessary for the constitutional amendments it required. Once on the statute books, it effectively served to retrospectively legitimise earlier government moves against the communist movement.[18]

Following the initial success of its campaign against the Left in the shape of the passing of the anti-communist laws, however, the movement, to survive, was forced to move further to the Right. New, more radical demands aimed at modifying the nature of the political system were introduced, including ones for limiting the franchise and the replacement of proportional representation by a smaller number of single-member constituencies. Criticism of liberal parliamentary ideals was heavily stepped up. The notion of a strong government, capable of acting in the greater national interest and free of the sort of party squabbling which, it was thought, had up until then weakened the country's abilities to resist the threat posed by the Left, came to dominate thinking within the movement.[19] The build-up in extra-parliamentary pressure which took place during the summer and autumn of 1930, embracing numerous kidnappings of political figures, such as the Social Democratic Vice-Speaker of Parliament, Väinö Hakkila, and former President K. J. Ståhlberg, together with the increasing level of violence surrounding Lapua movement-inspired action against the Left, ultimately told against the movement, however, and led a number of its hitherto supporters, both within and outside the organisation, to question its future.

The growing belief that, following the elimination of what were considered as the worst aspects of the communist threat with the approval of the anti-communist laws in November, the Lapua

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18. E. W. Juva 1961, pp. 393—7; Huttunen VI 1968, pp. 431—44; Mylly 1978, pp. 214—7; Kirby 1979 pp. 86—7.
19. See Herman Gummerus: Dagbok 26.6.1939; Kai Donner: Muistiinpanoja 28.9., 8.10.1930.

movement had largely served its purpose and that, if left unchecked, it could itself become a threat to the parliamentary system, led to members of the Agrarian and Progressive parties increasingly disassociating themselves from the movement. Similarly, within the Swedish People's Party, which had continued to support the movement as late as the peasants' march, opposition to it gradually began to get the upper hand as the violent means it employed came to be seen as potentially threatening the future position of the Swedish minority.[20] Resistance to the Lapua movement among the Social Democrats was restricted by the party's isolated position and ability to call on only relatively small reserves of backing from within the wider labour movement, the activities of which had been severely curtailed as a consequence of the banning of communist organisations in the summer of 1930.

By the time of the presidential elections held at the beginning of 1931, the disquiet felt towards the Lapua movement and its long-term aims among the majority of conservative opinion, the Agrarians included, had become firmly established. The choice of Svinhufvud in preference to Ståhlberg, in large part as a result of the Agrarians' decision to back the former, was significantly influenced by a general desire to re-establish social stability and guarantee a return to the rule of law. Svinhufvud, while enjoying wide support on the Right, even on the extreme Right, was committed to the maintenance of the parliamentary system.

Parliamentary democracy in Finland was maintained, in the final analysis, by the essentially moderate aims of the bulk of non-socialist opinion, which, while willing to support restrictions on what was seen as left-wing agitation and the abuse of an over-lenient system by the Left, never really called for the system's full-scale modification. The Sunila-led government, again a four-party coalition, which sat between 1931 and 1932, reflected this general trend of opinion. The Mäntsälä incident, which took place in the early spring of 1932, provoked by right-wing activists, amounted to something of a desperate last stand by the weakened Lapua movement. By this point, it enjoyed little support in either

20. Nordström 1946, pp. 72—5; Mylly 1978, pp. 218—9. Also see the report of the German envoy in Helsinki to Berlin (AA, Gesandschaft Helsinki, Politik 1930).

Parliament or the government for its calls for the banning of the Social Democratic Party, to which it had turned its attention after the passing of the anti-communist legislation the previous year. A central part in the failure of the attempt by those behind the Mäntsälä incident to achieve their aims was played by the widespread popular reaction which emerged against this display of a direct violent challenge to the authority of the government and the status quo. Aware of the desire within some sections of the military and the Right in Helsinki for a reorganisation of the country's power structure and their sympathies with those responsible for the incident, Svinhufvud ordered the army to seal off the Mäntsälä area to prevent trouble spreading and aid being sent to the rebels. The latters' final fate was sealed by a radio speech given by Svinhufvud calling for the end of disturbances and a return to order.[21]

Although the failure of the Mäntsälä incident in the spring of 1932 brought the banning of the Lapua movement, those on the radical Right soon rallied behind a new party, the People's Patriotic Movement (Isänmaallinen Kansanliike, IKL), which took over many of the political ideas previously identified with the Lapua organisation. While the latter's ideological emphasis had been strongly national and its programme born out of Finnish conditions, features which had allowed it to win a significant measure of mass popular support, the new party's style of public presentation and political programme were much more fundamentally shaped and influenced by ideas from abroad, particularly by the example of Germany's National Socialists and other fascist parties. Germany provided the major example for the organisation of the new party, although the military-style hierarchy characteristic of the Nazis was not introduced. Much was also learnt from the National Socialists in the use of propaganda. A number of attempts were made within the party for the establishment of a strong leadership based on the German model, but no agreement was reached among the various contenders, none of whom possessed the charisma called for in a true populist leader. In practice, the leadership of the party came to be split between a triumvirate, made up of Vihtori Kosola, Vilho

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21. Österman 1966, pp. 86—90; Paavo Susitaipale 23.2.1979.

Annala and Bruno Sundström (Salmiala). Some interest was also felt towards the Italian corporative system of organisation and outline plans for its implementation were drawn up, but no official IKL backing for it emerged.[22] Outside its own ranks, the right-wing ideas which now found expression in the IKL only really proved capable of influencing opinion within the National Coalition Party. As part of an attempt to widen the latter party's appeal, its leadership decided in November 1932, at Edwin Linkomies' suggestion, to develop a more conciliatory approach towards the IKL.[23]

Despite the swing away from the form of right-wing radical action typified by the Mäntsälä incident, which took place in its wake, conservative nationalist opinion remained, although not dominant, nevertheless a powerful factor in society. While the Social Democrats and the Centre aligned themselves behind policies aimed at reinforcing legitimacy and democracy, the extreme Right increasingly began to look to support for its ideals and political programme from the more extreme and authoritarian aspects of the White tradition, and from developments abroad. During the course of the run-up to the parliamentary elections held during the summer of 1933, the first waged by the new party, much emphasis was laid within the IKL on the celebrations held during the first half of the year on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the White victory in 1918.[24]

The Right, embracing both the more moderate National Coalition and the IKL, however, suffered a clear defeat in the 1933 elections, with its total number of seats reduced from 42 to 32, while the Social Democrats secured an increase of some ten seats on their previous standing, from 66 to 78. The Progressives enjoyed a mild upswing in their support as a result of their identification with the forces of legitimacy and association with Ståhlberg, but remained a minor force, far behind the Agrarians, who formed the second largest party. Looked at against an European perspective, the elections marked a clear shift for Finnish politics away from

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22. Bruno Salmiala 5.10.1979; Viljo Castrén 16.9.1980; Paavo Susitaipale 23.2.1979.
23. Uola 1982, pp. 151—2.
24. On the celebrations of the 'War of Liberation', see US 1.—5.1933 and AS 1.—5.1933.

sympathy with developments in Germany towards a more conscious alignment with those in Scandinavia. In domestic terms, the result consolidated the increasing unanimity which had developed on a number of policy issues between the Social Democrats, the Agrarians and the Progressives.

The success of the Social Democrats in gaining almost as large a number of seats as the entire Left had won in the 1929 elections came as something of a shock for the emigré leadership of the Communist Party, particularly after it had aligned itself behind calls for non-participation in the elections earlier in the year, calls which were ignored to all intents and purposes by the radical Left within Finland.[25] The scale of the setback provoked a wide-ranging reassessment by the party leadership, now including O. W. Kuusinen, of its policy, which had been adopted during the late 1920s in line with then current Comintern thinking, with the aim of improving the party's influence across the border. This resulted in a fairly rapid decision taken in the autumn to encourage members in Finland to abandon the policy of non-cooperation with the rest of the labour movement and take part in the activities of organisations such as the Social Democrat-dominated Trade Union Confederation (SAK). The latter had effectively taken the place of the more radical SAJ, which had been banned for its communist associations.[26]

Kivimäki's four-party minority coalition remained in office after the elections, with the backing of Svinhufvud and the tacit consent of the country's largest party, the Social Democrats, who saw the coalition as a lesser evil to a more right-wing alternative, possibly made up of the National Coalition Party and the IKL. Among the centre parties, some common ground emerged, but they remained divided on a number of questions, and little progress was made on bridging the gap existing between the socialists and non-socialists or in reducing the suspicions felt, particularly among the Agrarians, towards the Social Democrats. While the Centre and the Social Democrats were united against the more extreme aspects of the Right, the actual amount of leeway and influence allowed the labour movement remained consistently limited.

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25. SKP:n päätöksiä I, pp. 382, 386, 390, 394, 401.
26. Ibid., pp. 417—8; Hyvönen 1971, pp. 240—1; Antti Hyvönen 14.2.1972.

3. Party political and popular attitudes to international developments

The sharp ideological divisions and hostility between the Left and the Right typical of Finnish society during the early years of the 1930s also found expression in attitudes towards Finland's neighbours and the wider European stage, and the country's foreign policy. Opinion was also influenced by international ideological and political developments, as they spread across Europe and filtered through to Finland. Particularly characteristic of the early years of the decade was a heightened emphasis on nationalist values and ideals. Widespread calls were heard for the strengthening of the defence of national interests against the threat of outside interference. In presenting national and international interests as inherently incompatible, nationalist-minded thinkers and politicians typically adopted an aggressively uncompromising stance. In the strongly anti-communist and anti-marxist atmosphere generated and fostered by the activities of the Lapua movement, all political ideas and parties existing to the left of centre came to be looked upon by the Right as communist-led or communist-inspired. A central pillar of conservative thinking of the time was the belief that the labour movement in its entirety was committed to undermining national interests, and that the socialist parties, moderate and radical, were little better than puppets of the various Socialist and Communist Internationals. Against this background, it was no surprise then that the Social Democratic leader Väinö Tanner, despite his obviously moderate policies, was often described by the right wing of the National Coalition, and the IKL in particular, as the communist movement's right-hand man in Finland.[27]

Nationalist-minded ideologues were also strongly critical of liberal values and politicians, which were similarly seen as owing allegiance to an international, rather than a truly national political base. In its defence of the inviolability of political freedoms, liberalism was seen as assisting and encouraging the political efforts of the Left. Liberalism was also readily labelled as a political philosophy lacking solid traditions and clear-cut ideals, and given,

27. AS 29.8.1933.

by its very nature, to compromise what ideals it did stand for. Liberalism's apparent lack of resolution in the battle against Marxism regularly saw it described by the Right as defeatist and weak-willed. The necessity of this latter struggle convinced many on the Right, including such papers as *Uusi Suomi,* that the country might have to accept the sacrifice of some minor political and constitutional freedoms if Finland's continuing freedom from the socialist yolk was to be ensured. The identification of liberalism with weakness and lack of political resolve among conservative opinion led, in some nationalist interpretations, to Marxism and liberalism being looked upon as close ideological companions, united by a desire to lead the country away from secure national values and ideals. Criticism of this sort often indirectly assumed that the Right alone had a monopoly on safeguarding and advancing national interests.[28]

Central features of conservative calls for changes to the country's political system included the introduction of a stronger executive, the unification of the country behind a national programme, and the abandonment of factional, class-based attitudes. In the increasingly nationalist atmosphere which developed during the 1930s, the ideas surrounding Finland's Finno-Ugrian cultural inheritance, and the political and cultural ambitions they had given birth to and continued to encourage, gained added vigour. Although intentionally kept in the background by their supporters during the peak period of the activity of the Lapua movement, in order to allow the widest possible degree of unity within non-socialist opinion during the anti-communist campaign, they soon re-emerged after the movement's demise. Typical of these ethnically-coloured nationalist ideas was a strong emphasis on the independence of the Finnish cultural identity, particularly with regard to Sweden, coupled with an increasing level of interest in the other Finno-Ugrian peoples and national groups, many of which lived in the Soviet Union.

This latter aspect came out particularly strongly in the case of Ingria, where the introduction of collectivisation in the early 1930s and the resettlement of large numbers of the local population elsewhere in the Soviet Union aroused widespread and strong

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28. US 25.4.1932, 17.9., 22.11.1933; AS 16.8., 13.9., 20.9.1933; UA 28.6.1933.

criticism within Finland. Criticism was particularly forceful among the ranks of the AKS and similar organisations, the press and the Church. The latter was also concerned at the Soviet Union's intensification of its anticlerical campaign. Especial attention was drawn to what was seen as the Soviet government's flagrant disregard of its commitments, made at the time of the signing of the Tartu Peace, guaranteeing the rights of the local population in the area. Criticism of this aspect of Soviet attitudes towards the terms of the Tartu agreement also gave increased impetus to the wider criticism of the treaty which had developed on the Finnish Right during the 1920s, and which had existed in one form or another from its ratification onwards.[29]

In addition to the Ingrian issue, interest also gravitated around the fate of other Finnish-related populations, among them that living in Northern Sweden. The position of this group had been the object of Finnish attention, mainly focused on the restrictions put on the use of Finnish by the Church and local schools, from the nineteenth century onwards. Interest in the question had been kept alive by the activities and efforts of the population in the hinterland along the Finnish-Swedish border and by students from the same area at Helsinki University, and the support given to calls for government pressure on the Swedish authorities by two of the leading papers in the north of Finland, *Pohjolan Sanomat* and *Kaleva*.[30] The demands for a change in conditions across the border gained added impetus when they were taken up by the National Student Federation (SYL). The latter organisation prepared a special report on the position of Finnish in the region which, despite the opposition of the Foreign Minister, Hjalmar Procopé, was also published in French in an attempt to draw international attention to the problem.[31] Despite this flurry of activity during the early 1930s, however, by mid-decade the whole

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29. For the Church's reaction to developments in Ingria, see Kaila 1932, pp. 105—8, and reports appearing in the Church paper *Kotimaa* in early 1930 and 1931. For attitudes on the Tartu peace, see Korhonen I 1966, pp. 212—3. See also K. J. Ståhlberg's letter of 29.11.1930 to Rafael Erich (Erich collection V 6).
30. Viitanen 1917, pp. 81—7; Näsi 1928, pp. 48—59; Ilmari Turja 12.5.1979; Elsa Vuorjoki 12.5.1979.
31. Klinge IV 1968, pp. 118—20; *Ylioppilaslehti* 29.9., 13.10., 8.12.1928. The pamphlet mentioned appeared under the French title of 'La question de la minorité finlandaise en Suède' (1930).

issue sunk quietly back into the background. Some interest also emerged over the fate of the tiny Livonian minority, numbering little more than 1,500, living in Latvia. Their cause was especially championed by the linguist Lauri Kettunen and the nationalist Suomalaisuuden Liitto organisation (The Finnish Federation), the latter appealing to the Foreign Ministry in the mid-1930s for diplomatic pressure to be put on Latvia to halt what was seen as the oppression of the Livonian-speaking population. Kettunen chose the more direct approach of appealing directly to the Latvian Ministry of the Interior in Riga, but found his case roundly declared as amounting to an attempt to interfere in Latvian internal affairs.[32]

Finland's liberals, who had seen much cause for optimism during the previous decade as a result of what many took to be the victory of democratic and parliamentary values in post-war Europe, experienced the upswing in right-wing opinion and influence which took place during the early 1930s as a particularly bitter setback. This sense of disillusionment and growing isolation was only intensified as the Right steadily gained ground elsewhere in Europe and as many of the major European liberal parties, such as Lloyd George's British party and Staaff's Swedish party, succumbed to rapidly dwindling popularity. Some hope was provided by the example of the Scandinavian countries, which continued to remain identified in liberal opinion with democratic values and freedom under the law. Britain also continued to enjoy a respected position among liberals by virtue of her identification as the home of parliamentary government and liberal democratic ideals.[33]

The increased emphasis on nationalist conservative values typical of the period was seen as particularly dangerous by the country's Swedish-speaking population, which considered the development as likely to isolate Finland from Sweden and the other countries of Scandinavia, and to undermine the future of their own community. The swing of Swedish-speaking politicians behind opposition to the Lapua movement as the latter increasingly resorted to violent means to achieve its aims was paralleled

32. Kyrölä 1979, pp. 8—13.
33. Paasivirta 1968, p. 93.

by an increasing emphasis by these politicians on what were seen as the positive Scandinavian values of respect for the rule of law, political rights and personal freedoms.[34] The continued strength of nationalist opinion within society in the post-Lapua period only strengthened the need felt within the Swedish-speaking community for stronger links with Scandinavia, and made Swedish-speakers particularly grateful for all the support for their case, which they were not slow in making known to the wider Scandinavian audience, which they received from Sweden and the rest of the Nordic area. A good illustration of this support, and of the Swedish-speaking population's ability to mobilise Scandinavian interest on issues linked to the survival of its role in Finnish society, was the address, arguing against the more extreme ambitions of those attempting to minimise the role of Swedish at Helsinki University and signed by academics from three Scandinavian countries, presented to the Finnish authorities in 1934.[35]

Like the Progressives, the Social Democrats too saw much to depress and unsettle them in the pattern of international developments in Europe typical of the early years of the 1930s. Storm clouds presaging harder times ahead appeared to be gathering on the horizon, in the eyes of many party observers. The growing threat to parliamentary democracy in a number of European countries and the emergence in some of semi-dictatorships, together with the unprecedented economic slump and increasingly tense international relations, were seen as major causes of alarm. A particular source of concern within the labour movement was the sharp drop in many European countries in the influence and power of the socialist cause from the peak it had achieved in the years immediately following the end of the First World War. Social Democrats had not only lost their role in shaping policies in many countries in Europe, but also often their seats in government as well. Faced with a powerful shift towards the Right and a tottering free market world economy, many European socialists found themselves increasingly forced to play

34. Nordström 1946, pp. 80—3; v. Born 1954, pp. 203—6; Hbl 13.12.1933; SvPr 14.12.1933.
35. Mustelin 1981, pp. 15, 38, 51.

the part of defenders of the political status quo, instead of promoters of socialist reform. In the background loomed the possibility of the collapse of liberal democracy altogether and with it the labour movement, not only in Europe but in Finland as well, and its replacement by right-wing authoritarianism.[36]

Left-wing discontent with developments in Finland during the early 1930s also found expression in a wave of clandestine emigration to the Soviet Union. This was encouraged in part by the rapid rise in unemployment in Finland typical of the time, and in part by the Soviet Union's need for extra manpower to help in constructing the extensive heavy industrial base envisaged in the first five-year plans. Spurred by the extensive coverage given to descriptions of the wide availability of work for those wanting it in the Finnish-language radio programmes broadcast from Leningrad and Petrozavodsk, this clandestine emigration reached its peak during 1931 and 1932. Only some of those who crossed the border, however, found work in Soviet Karelia, the main object of Finnish interest, working on such projects as the hydroelectric development on the Svir river; many ended up further east in the Urals or in Siberia.

The movement of would-be emigrants across the border appears largely to have halted by the end of 1932, caused not by any significant improvement in economic conditions in Finland, then still suffering the effects of the recession, but rather by the spread of unfavourable reports about the harsh conditions existing in the Soviet Union. In terms of numbers, the figure of those who decided to move amounted to between 10-15,000, as extrapolated on the basis of the number of those arrested at the border.[37] The young age of many of those involved points to a certain element of adventurism as having motivated at least some, above and beyond political sympathies, and a desire to take advantage of the opportunities the Soviet Union appeared to offer in comparison to Finland. This wave of clandestine Finnish emigration to the Soviet Union took place at around the same time as the officially-encouraged and more clearly ideologically-motivated emigration

36. Gitermann 1939, pp. 353—6.
37. See interviews with Toivo Aalto, Kaino Lehtonen and Kosti Öhman, 12.4.1983; TS 18.8.1932.

by Finnish Americans and Canadians to East Karelia to assist in the region's development.[38]

Hitler's rise to power in Germany, followed by the rapid consolidation of his position in the first half of 1933, was the cause of much discussion and interest in political circles in Finland, much of it only serving, however, to further underline the divisions existing within Finnish opinion. The Right was quick to try and take advantage of this shift in German fortunes. Less an indication of any outright admiration of Hitler's political philosophy, right-wing interest reflected a fascination with the political and socio-economic potential contained in Hitler's initiative for galvanising German development. The forming of Hitler's first government in January 1933 was described by *Uusi Suomi* as a victory for German nationalism, while *Ajan Suunta* saw the development as opening up the way for a true restoration of German confidence and of Germany's position in the world.[39] Those on the Right consistently underlined Hitler's role in eliminating the communist threat in Germany, and the benefit this held for the rest of Europe. Less attention was given to the uncomfortable fact that, in crushing Marxism, parliamentary democracy had also been abandoned. Hitler's role in establishing internal order in Germany after a long period of social unrest and instability found especial favour with both conservative and more moderate non-socialist opinion, a fact linked to the deeply-rooted attachment to the ideal of social stability felt in these circles, partly born out of the Civil War of 1918 and partly originating in more general conservative attitudes.[40] The positive picture of Germany typical of non-socialist opinion was reinforced by the respect felt towards German culture, science and industry in general, mixed in with the debt of gratitude felt towards Germany for the assistance she had given the Whites during the Civil War.

The rise in right-wing confidence following the apparent upturn in German fortunes brought by Hitler saw the Social Democrats again subjected to strong attacks by the Right, with increased efforts being made to question the wisdom of allowing the party to

38. Kero 1983, pp. 28—42.
39. US 31.1.1933; AS 31.1.1933.
40. Paasivirta 1968, pp. 92—3.

remain active. Paavo Virkkunen, a leading figure on the Right, described the socialist movement as having suffered an historic setback as a result of its virtual collapse in the heart of Europe in a speech he gave in mid-April 1933, and claimed that socialism in Finland too was on its last legs.[41] Demands were made in Parliament for the banning of the party, for its activities in undermining the country's independence and acting contrary to the spirit of the constitution. Edwin Linkomies, another leading conservative prominent on the right wing of the National Coalition Party, expressed a widely-felt fear when he criticised the Social Democratic party's membership of the Socialist International, an organisation which he saw as dictating the party's policy on foreign policy questions.[42] These attempts to question the continued existence of the Social Democrats as a political party were, however, rebuffed by much of moderate non-socialist opinion, which stressed the potential unconstitutionality of attempts to ban the party. The pressure from the Right against the socialists nevertheless proved so strong that the socialist leadership felt forced to restate the nature of its membership of the Socialist International at the party congress held in Tampere in May 1933. Far from blindly following each and every decision made by the International, the party stressed that it followed its own judgement and assessments, as was undoubtedly in fact the case.[43]

Despite the vocal nature of conservatives' claims that Finland's future lay with the Right, the obvious sympathy felt towards developments in Germany expressed in the pages of *Uusi Suomi, Ajan Suunta* and other similar-minded publications, reflected the views of only a limited number of opinion-makers, albeit prominent ones, and did not reflect those of much of the mass of the population. Overall public opinion in the wake of the

41. See Paavo Virkkunen's speech in Kuopio on 17.4.1933, as reported in US 18.4.1933. US 23.4., 23.6., 3.7.1933; UA 30.5.1933; AS 10.5., 16.5.1933.
42. See Paavo Virkkunen's and other right-wing members' question in Parliament on 19.4.1933 (VP 1933 ptk., pp. 2771—3). Also, Edvin Linkomies' speech on 7.5.1933 at the party conference of the National Coalition Party, as reported in US 8.5.1933. On attitudes within the IKL, see Uola 1982, pp. 180—1.
43. SDP:n puoluekokous 1933 ptk., p. 83; H. Soikkanen 1975, p. 543; SS 27.4.1933; Hbl 8.6.1933.

Mäntsälä incident increasingly shied away from supporting the types of proposals aimed at modifying the country's political system put forward by both the far Right and more moderate right-wing circles. There seems no reason to doubt that the great majority of the population had no wish to undermine the democratic system. Events in Germany ultimately failed to generate any significant swing in public opinion. The 1933 elections pointed instead to a modest shift to the Centre-Left. While internal political developments in Finland over the period 1930-1933 show some points of similarity with those in Germany, they were nevertheless, at base, quite dissimilar.

For all the difference between the pattern of events in Germany and Finland, there is no denying, however, that Hitler's rise to power represented a heavy psychological blow to the Finnish Social Democrats. The disquiet it aroused on the Left was only intensified following the moves taken in Germany against organised labour and the socialist movement, which resulted in Germany's departure from the international socialist community, in which it had traditionally occupied an important place, both politically and ideologically. Similarly, the moves by the Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss during 1934, directed at banning the activities of the Austrian Social Democratic Party, together with the armed resistance it evoked, were also seen as further depressing evidence of the widening campaign against the Left increasingly typical of European politics.[44] The loss of confidence these developments produced within the party was to an extent short-lived, however, as a result of the ideological support provided by the party's growing ties with Scandinavia. Inspiration was particularly taken from the example of the Swedish Social Democrats and what was seen as their demonstration of the political credibility of social democracy within a liberal democratic constitution. The joint committee of Scandinavian social democratic parties and trade unions, founded in 1933 and embracing the Finnish Social Democratic party and the Social Democrat-dominated SAK among its members, represented a clear example of the desire of the Scandinavian socialists to develop some measure of commonly-

44. HS 13.2.1934; Hbl 14.2.1934; SS 14.2., 18.2.1934.

agreed alternative to the right-wing policies gaining ground in Europe.[45]

The setback experienced by the Right in the 1933 elections sparked off a wide-ranging discussion within the National Coalition Party on the direction of its future policy, together with a review of past policy strategy, including the decision taken in November 1932 to pursue a line more sympathetic to the IKL. Calls for the party to disassociate itself from the People's Patriotic Movement were particularly prominent in the pages of *Karjala* and *Aamulehti,* calls which found a ready ear in the party's new leader J. K. Paasikivi, elected in 1934.[46] A conservative of the old school, Paasikivi felt little sympathy with European fascism and was critical of the political changes which had taken place in Germany. Writing in a letter to a friend in early May 1933, Paasikivi expressed his doubts about how long Hitler, for all his obvious leadership skills, would in fact '... be able to keep the masses on his side without being forced to move ever further to the Left.'[47] Paasikivi's philosophy as party leader seems to have been based in large measure on a desire to guide the National Coalition away from its more right-wing associations towards becoming a more Scandinavian-style conservative party. The right wing of the party, with Edwin Linkomies and Paavo Virkkunen at its head, remained committed, however, to a more uncompromising political philosophy. In 1934, a proposal was made by the latter for strengthening the power of the head of state through the introduction of presidentially-nominated ministers and an absolute right of veto.[48] This idea, which shared clear points of similarity with the ministerial system adopted by President Hindenburg in Germany between 1930 and 1932, reflected the desire of Linkomies and others to significantly increase Svinhufvud's potential for shaping the pattern of the country's

45. On the activities of the joint Scandinavian committee, see the organisation's minutes for the period 1933—39 (LO archive).
46. *Karjala* 29.10.1934; *Aamulehti* 30.10.1934; Brummer 1934, pp. 66—77.
47. See Paasikivi's letters of 2.5.1933 to Eino Railo and of 10.5.1933 to Hugo Suolahti (Railo collection SKS, Hugo Suolahti collection).
48. See Linkomies' speech in Tampere on 21.1.1934, as reported in US 22.1.1934 and Paavo Virkkunen's and other's proposal for a strenghtening of governmental authority made in Parliament on 12.2.1934 (VP 1934 Liitteet I, p. 8), reported in US 20.2.1934.

politics and, by so doing, reduce the influence of the otherwise numerically strong Social Democrats and Agrarians, and rebalance the Ståhlbergian-inspired liberal constitution in the direction of one more in tune with their own political sympathies.

The uncompromising tone and fervour of attitudes within the IKL only intensified as the party found its feet. By June 1933, K. R. Kares, one of the movement's leading figures, was already warning Finland to prepare herself for what he described as a major political upheaval and one which he saw as likely to be echoed across the world. The struggle against Marxism in Europe had to be extended to embrace every corner of the Continent, IKL speakers continually underlined. With the emergence of a Soviet Sweden and a Soviet Denmark very real possibilities in the minds of IKL commentators, it was no surprise that *Ajan Suunta* described Finland as Scandinavia's 'last bastion' against the advances of international Marxism. IKL thinkers appear to have put their hope in the emergence of a network of powerful nationalist movements spreading across Europe, sweeping away socialism once and for all.[49]

The early 1930s saw the Agrarians forced to abandon their vision of an Europe in which rural-based parties would play a central role, in the face of the emergence of authoritarian régimes in many of the countries of Eastern Europe. When, in 1934, Estonia and Latvia also shifted away from democracy to forms of semi-dictatorship, albeit with agrarian parties in both countries playing a central role in providing support for the change, the Agrarians' peasant ideals also began to crumble in the Baltic area. The net result of these developments was to refocus attention on areas elsewhere in Europe and force a general reassessment of party attitudes towards international developments as a whole.

4. Finnish foreign policy during the early 1930s

While successful in consolidating some aspects of Finland's international position during the course of the 1920s, Finnish foreign policy-makers experienced a number of difficulties in their

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49. AS 10.6., 16.6., 21.7., 15.8., 2.9., 1.11.1933, 13.2., 31.3.1934.

efforts to develop a satisfactory security and alliance policy. Beyond their formal recognition of Finnish independence, none of the Western powers had proved willing to provide Finland with any guarantees of her new status. Similar resistance had been encountered with regard to Sweden, particularly after the widespread rejection of Hedenstierna's defensive alliance proposal in 1923. Little had come of moves aimed at a closer association with the Baltic countries, although the press occasionally carried news of renewed contacts between the four countries.[50] Following the signing of the Rapallo Pact, Germany had emerged as a potential destabilising factor in the Baltic area. The Soviet Union, however, continued to be seen as the single largest threat to Finland's future security. Despite the modest improvement which had taken place in them by the end of the 1920s, Soviet-Finnish relations continued to remain decidedly cool.

The rise in international tension during the early 1930s and the increasing doubts about Finland's long-term security, which up until then had been considered relatively unproblematic, which it brought with it, coupled with domestic upheavals, made the need for some form of policy reassessment unavoidable. The decline in the international situation was accompanied by a general weakening in the belief in the possibility of maintaining continued peace in Europe and in the potential of the League of Nations to fulfil all the expectations that had been placed on it. The blows to the League's credibility caused by the Japanese attack on Manchuria and the failure of the Geneva-based disarmament congress were noted with concern in Finland. The fall-off in confidence in the League in Finland was only accelerated following the ending of Procopé's term as Foreign Minister in 1931.[51] Set against these developments, the implications of Finland's isolated international position began to be increasingly widely appreciated. During the optimistic atmosphere charac-teristic of the second half of the 1920s, the country's growing isolation had not generally been considered of any real significance. Being essentially unprepared for the change of events brought by the early 1930s, Finland proved slow to develop any policy or

50. Hbl 1.12.1928; SS 26.11.1928.
51. Selén 1974, pp. 54, 62—7.

concerted diplomatic initiative to counter the problem.

The rise of the Lapua movement had a marked influence in injecting a new sense of tension into relations with the Soviet Union. The kidnappings of various figures carried out by the supporters of the movement, and which often also involved their victims being dumped across the border in the Soviet Union, led to the Soviet government presenting the Finnish authorities with a protest note in July 1930, demanding a halt to these illegal border infringements. No immediate Finnish response was forthcoming and it was not until mid-September that Svinhufvud's government finally answered, after repeated Soviet comments on the issue. The Finnish reply was uncompromising and somewhat sympathetic to the actions of the Lapua extremists. A further Soviet note followed the same autumn.[52] Press reaction to the government's attitude to the continuing series of kidnappings and to its response to the obvious Soviet disquiet they aroused was mixed. *Uusi Suomi*, in common with many other right-wing papers, attempted to lay the blame for the deterioration in relations between the two countries at the door of the Soviet government, while at the same time defending the Finnish authorities' relatively outspoken stance.[53] *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Hufvudstadsbladet*, while defending the government, both emphasised the importance of maintaining peaceful and untroubled relations with the Soviet Union. *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* did not spare its criticism of the Svinhufvud administration and considered it largely responsible for the tension which had developed in relations between the two countries.[54]

Further friction was introduced into the Soviet-Finnish relationship by the heated press discussion which developed within Finland on the position of the Ingrian population across the border in the area around Leningrad. The new Sunila-led coalition government which took office in the early spring of 1931 initially attempted to follow a policy of non-involvement in the debate on Soviet policy in the area. By May, however, the government acceded to the pressure which had built up on the issue and sent a

52. Korhonen I 1966, pp. 203—9.
53. US 4.10.1930.
54. HS 12.10.1930; Hbl 5.10.1930; SS 11.10.1930.

note to the Soviet authorities in which it demanded the ending of all forced relocation of the Ingrian population. This quickly brought a Soviet rebuff and a further exchange of notes.[55] The tension this generated proved short-lived, however, as a result of what seems to have been a tacit decision by both governments not to allow the issue to escalate. Following this cooling of government tempers, the issue was quietly dropped by the majority of the Finnish press, until it eventually became restricted solely to radical nationalist publications.[56]

A number of figures within the Foreign Ministry, the government and Parliament were well aware of the dangers for Finland in letting the events of the early 1930s distort attitudes towards the Soviet Union, and undermine what progress had been made in developing Finnish-Soviet relations since independence. The emergence of the Lapua movement and the upswing in right-wing influence it reflected tended to be seen within these circles as representing a short-lived aberration. The influence of this more considered approach to the question of long-term Finnish-Soviet relations was particularly evident when the question of a possible non-aggression treaty between the two countries was revived towards the end of 1931, at a time when other countries along the Soviet Union's western border were also reassessing their relations with the Soviet Union. France's decision to begin talks aimed at closer links with the Soviet Union led to Poland beginning efforts to improve her relations with her eastern neighbour, a development followed by similar moves by the smaller border states. The Soviet Union, which saw developments in the Far East and Japan's increased military activity as likely to threaten Soviet interests on the country's eastern flank, was keen to underpin its security interests along its European frontier. The Finnish authorities for their part were becoming increasingly concerned about Finland's isolated position.[57] In their attempts to come to an accord over a non-aggression treaty, there was thus a common interest on the part of both the Soviet and Finnish negotiators to prevent issues, such as the arbitration methods to be used in any dispute,

55. Korhonen I 1966, pp. 214—6.
56. HS 19.5.1931; *Suomenmaa* 20.5.1931; AS 19.5.1931.
57. Korhonen I 1966, pp. 222—5.

developing into major stumbling blocks, as they had done during the previous joint discussions on a similar treaty held in 1926. Finnish efforts to try and have the agreement linked to a wider network of similar agreements with the other border states, however, failed. The final treaty, the result in large part of the personal efforts of the then Foreign Minister, Aarno Yrjö-Koskinen, was signed at the end of January 1932 and ratified in July of the same year.[58]

The importance of the treaty to the Soviet Union in clarifying Soviet-Finnish relations and relations between the Soviet Union and the rest of Europe, and thereby indirectly reducing Soviet isolation, was reflected in the Soviet decision to continue discussion at a time of severe domestic tension within Finland, and in spite of the resurgence of radical right-wing anti-Soviet opinion it embraced. From the Finnish point of view, the agreement represented a significant step forward in easing the immediate pressures surrounding the country's relations with what was generally considered her most potentially threatening neighbour. Although representing a victory for *realpolitik*, the treaty did not nevertheless mark any significant increase in the measure of mutual trust or confidence existing between Finland and the Soviet Union, or any real opening-up of bilateral relations between the two countries.

The treaty's reception within Finland was mixed and far from universally positive. Among the Social Democrats, the agreement was considered a significant advance and as potentially capable of providing a good basis for improved bilateral relations. Within non-socialist opinion, with the exception of the far Right which had been opposed to concluding any agreement, the treaty was looked upon fairly positively as marking a stabilisation and consolidation of Finland's relations with the Soviet Union, although it was not considered as significantly improving Finland's long-term national security. Much informal discussion concerning the treaty's relative value to Finland took place within political circles, including a fair proportion which was openly sceptical of its benefits. Typical of the latter was President Svinhufvud's comment, contained in a letter written some time later to his old

58. Ibid., pp. 231—5.

friend R. A. Wrede, to the effect that: 'Treaties of this sort do not provide us with any protection against Russia.'[59] In contrast to this pessimism, the treaty was welcomed by some sections of the business community, which hoped that its signing would be followed by an opening-up of trade with the East, which had been at a virtual standstill since independence.[60] The many problems encountered by the country's export industries as a result of the international recession only served to concentrate commercial minds on the possibilities offered by an expanded Finnish-Soviet trading relationship.

Overall developments in Europe in 1933 and especially in Germany, together with the prospect of a new and more aggressive style of German foreign policy, led to increased international speculation and a growing sense of general uncertainty and instability, in Finland as elsewhere. Of particular interest to Finland in this fluid situation were the proposals put forward by Soviet diplomats from the autumn of 1933 onward concerning a possible security agreement embracing the whole of the Baltic region. In December 1933, the Soviet Union proposed a joint agreement to Poland aimed at making both countries responsible for guaranteeing security in the Baltic area, and in March 1934 a parallel arrangement was offered to Germany aimed at making the Soviet Union and Germany regional guarantors. Discussions also took place later the same spring between the Soviet and French foreign ministers, Litvinov and Barthou, as part of the closer ties developing between the two countries, on the possibility of instituting a Locarno-type agreement covering Eastern Europe and guaranteeing the region's status quo and balance of power.[61] None of these ideas were particularly welcomed by the Finnish government, as there was no wish for Finland's security to be reliant on guarantees made between third parties, or on any protective umbrella agreement sponsored by the great powers. It was feared that, if the Soviet Union became the ultimate guarantor of Finland's international position, there would be little to prevent Finland becoming increasingly dependent on Soviet policy and

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59. Ibid., pp. 236—7; Mylly 1978, p. 232. See Svinhufvud's letter of 17.1.1934 to Wrede (Wrede collection).
60. US 30.3.1932; *Maakansa* 3.4.1932; SvPr 24.3.1932.
61. Vehviläinen 1966, pp. 188—91, 195—7; Duroselle 1979, pp. 105—11.

Soviet goodwill, providing the Soviet authorities with a ready opportunity to interfere in Finnish domestic affairs. Developments affecting the political balance between the major powers, and which ultimately saw both Germany and France effectively switching allies in Eastern Europe, progressed apace in Eastern and Central Europe. Poland, France's major ally in the East, signed a treaty of friendship with Germany in 1934, and the same year France herself made a treaty of alliance with the Soviet Union, which was extended the following year into a military treaty embracing Czechoslovakia.[62]

While the Soviet plans for regional security in the Baltic area aroused relatively unanimous opposition within much of Finnish opinion, attitudes towards the new, more prominent role being played by German foreign policy in the region were less clear-cut. There was a large question mark in many Finnish observers' minds over whether the rise in German influence that was being witnessed merely marked a general strengthening of the German position and a controlled shift in the balance of power in Europe, or whether it presaged a period of heightened tension between the major European powers and, if the latter was the case, to what degree it was likely to have an influence over future Soviet attitudes towards Finland.

The growing influence wielded by the major powers, and its implications for Finland's independence of manoeuvre with regard to foreign policy, led the Finnish leadership to focus increasing attention on the problem of developing a more effective foreign policy to counter the country's ever-deepening international isolation. Sweden, together with Scandinavia as a whole, came to be seen by many as an increasingly attractive potential ally. The Social Democrats and the Swedish People's Party, both possessing good ties with Swedish politicians and Swedish government circles, were keen to see the country's foreign policy more closely aligned with that of the Scandinavian countries. For all their relative parliamentary strength, however, neither of these two parties wielded significant influence in governmental decision or policy-making. Closer ties between Sweden and Finland were also overshadowed, as a number of leading non-

62. Carr 1973, pp. 200, 204; Korhonen I 1966, pp. 34, 55, 61.

socialist figures such as R. A. Wrede and Lauri Ingman observed, by the tensions and emotions which continued to be generated by the language struggle, and the hostility towards Sweden, for what was seen as her tacit support of Swedish-speaking interests, still strong within the Finnish-speaking community.[63]

A new factor, and one which was to prove significant in the longer term, was introduced into the foreign policy equation by the return of Mannerheim, who had been very much on the fringes of the political world during virtually the whole of the 1920s, to a prominent role in society during 1933 and 1934. This process had got under way in 1931, when he had been appointed chairman of the Defence Council. Subsequent to this, he had begun to take an increasingly public stand on both the general pattern of international political developments and individual issues. The Mannerheim that now emerged was, in many respects, significantly different from the Mannerheim that had argued so strongly on the intervention question back in 1919. Although his focus of interest continued to be centred on the great powers, he now showed, in line with his acceptance of the Bolsheviks' hold on power in the Soviet Union and realisation that the communist authorities had taken over many traditional Russian attitudes on security issues, a much clearer concern for Finnish defence and security questions. In contrast to his earlier identification with a policy of actively involving Finland in international politics, Mannerheim now proved much more reluctant to see Finland involved in international disputes and international power politics, and keen instead to see Finland insulated as far as possible from the knock-on effects they might have in the Baltic.

Speaking on foreign and security policy in July 1934, Mannerheim stressed Finland's position as an integral part of the Scandinavian community, and the importance of strengthening the defences of all the countries in the region. As part of this, he also proposed a reassessment of the treaty on the Åland Islands to allow Finland to ensure the area's defence at a time of crisis.[64] In contrast to those sections of party political opinion favourably disposed towards developing Finnish-Scandinavian relations,

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63. T. Soikkanen 1983, pp. 25—6.
64. Jägerskiöld IV 1973, pp. 314—5; Mannerheim II 1952, pp. 50—3.

however, Mannerheim's ideas also clearly envisaged the possibility of Finland and Sweden coming to a closer level of cooperation over joint defence policies. In the field of domestic politics, Mannerheim now adopted a more neutral position, contrasting with the rather ambiguous, if not openly partisan one he had embraced earlier in the decade at the time of the rise of the Lapua movement.[65]

The Soviet Union's acceptance as a member state of the League of Nations in the autumn of 1934, coupled with Germany's departure from the League the previous year, highlighting the deepening division between these two powers, gave Finnish policy-makers added cause for concern and speculation. In consolidating the latters' desire to prevent the country from becoming dependent on great power guarantees covering the Baltic region, these developments increased the general attraction of a closer association with Scandinavia. The continuing strength of anti-Swedish opinion and the doubts existing over how far the Social Democrats and the Swedish People's Party, otherwise favourably disposed to Scandinavia, let alone the other parties, would be willing to go in practice in committing themselves to a more Scandinavian-oriented foreign and security policy, served to hamper progress on the issue, however, and prevent the formulation of any clear policy initiative.[66]

5. The development of the armed forces

Having overcome the initial difficulties encountered in establishing the basic framework for the country's armed forces by the mid-1920s, the defence establishment turned its attention to the problems involved in developing the overall capabilities and structure of the three services over the longer term. Central among these were the questions of a suitable system of organisation and logistical planning for mobilisation, improved training facilities

65. See Mannerheim's electoral appeal of 30.9.1930, as reported in US 1.10.1930. Also Jägerskiöld IV 1973, p. 146; E. W. Juva II, p. 473.
66. Kivimäki 1965, p. 94. See also Hackzell's speech in Parliament on 23.11.1934 (VP 1934 ptk., pp. 2331—7). T. Soikkanen 1983, pp. 17, 37.

and methods, and the requirement for specialist units within the overall military structure.

A novel plan calling for mobilisation to rely on a regional, rather than a more traditional unit-based system of organisation had been drawn up in the mid-1920s. The advantage of such an arrangement, as argued by its proponents, lay in the potential it offered the High Command of being able to deploy a substantial quantity of conscript-based units at short notice to act as a covering force until reserve units could be fully assembled and put into the field. Major L. Grandell, who was mainly responsible for developing the idea and who had presented it to the Hornborg Committee on defence planning in 1924, had been partly inspired by the old Swedish regionally-based territorial army system once used in Finland, which had allowed for units to be locally recruited, and partly by similar ideas employed by the Norwegian Army.[67] Further development of the proposal, however, had been stalled following its failure to win the backing of the Hornborg Committee. It was taken up again in 1928 by the then Defence Minister Juho Niukkanen, who, in the hope of thus being able to reduce the period of service served by conscripts, directed Lt.Col. A. F. Airo to draw up a new report on the possibility of introducing a regional system of army organisation. Although coming to the conclusion that no reduction was feasible, Airo came out in favour of a form of organisation along the lines earlier proposed by Grandell. He also suggested the setting-up of separate units to be responsible for local call-up in each of the proposed military districts, rather than relying on local Civil Guard units, as had been proposed in Grandell's original outline.[68]

An internal military committee, headed by General K. L. Oesch and including Col. Grandell among its members, established in 1930 to assess the merits of the case for a regional system, similarly concluded that it would provide the best solution. As head of the section within the General Staff responsible for mobilisation plans, Grandell was subsequently instructed to begin work on detailed plans for the system's implementation and the redistribution of

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67. Grandell 1954, pp. 1—4; Raikkala III 1964, pp. 21—2. Also Grandell's 'Förslag till arméns organisation' (Puolustusrevisionin paperit/SA).
68. Raikkala III 1964, pp. 24—8, 33.

army manpower and material resources it would require.[69] Discussions were also put in hand with the Civil Guard, with the result that it was finally decided not to integrate local Civil Guard units into the planned regional network and instead to rely on the regular army to handle conscription matters. While allowing the Civil Guard to maintain a certain measure of the independence it had sought so hard to preserve, the division drawn between the two forces proved in practice to be somewhat nominal. Following reorganisation, links between the commanders of regional Civil Guard districts and their opposite regular army numbers, although informal, were often close. Local Civil Guard units came in time to be organised, along similar lines to those employed in the regular army, into specialist infantry, artillery, signals and other detachments, to ease their integration into regional mobilisation plans.[70]

Introduction of the regional system, which was begun in 1932, meant a major upheaval for the army's infrastructure. The country was divided into a total of nine military provinces, each designed to form the basis for a wartime division. Each of these was subdivided in turn into two or three military districts, as the basis for an equivalent number of wartime regiments and batteries when brought up to full strength. The conscript training programme was also overhauled in the light of the reform, to provide a wider range of trained manpower in line with the units called for in the new military districts and provinces. This inevitably put a considerable strain on training resources, calling as it did for a substantially larger number of specialist officers than previously to take charge of the new units created, and caused a significant temporary officer shortfall in other areas of the armed forces. In May 1934, when the new system had been fully implemented, the army's stockpiles of military equipment were also decentralised and split between the new military districts.[71]

By the beginning of the 1930s, the basis of an integrated training programme had also been introduced, with increasing attention being directed towards ensuring that the overall level of training

69. Ibid., pp. 38, 42.
70. Ibid., pp. 36, 39, 74; Suojeluskuntien yliesikunnan vuosikertomus v. 1933, pp. 3—4.
71. Terä—Tervasmäki 1973, pp. 153—5; Seppälä 1974, pp. 115—8.

kept pace with technical and other developments. A significant step forward in the training given to conscripts had been taken with the completion of a large number of new and detailed training programmes at the end of the 1920s, a process which continued into the early 1930s.[72] This marked the ending of the often uncoordinated training methods, sometimes varying from unit to unit, which had been in use previously, and a move towards a systematic pattern of training better suited to the needs of the various arms of the armed forces, as well as an improvement in the general level of training. The previous emphasis on drill discipline and, in the case of infantry units, on closed order formation battle practice increasingly gave way to one focused on a more flexible style of combat training designed to prepare conscripts for a wider variety of operations and conditions, in line with the tactical training ideas developed at the Military Academy, and aimed at better matching Finland's defence needs and terrain.

Officer training also came in for reform. The numbers of conscripts serving an extended period of service and given additional training for subsequent reserve officer duty had been raised substantially in the mid-1920s, to an annual total of some 900. This was complemented with the introduction in 1927 of a new series of training programmes, based around developing specific specialist skills, at the army's Reserve Officer Training School. The training of reserve navy and coastal defence officers was begun at the Naval Academy in 1930, and that of reserve air force officers at the Air Force Academy in Kauhava in 1931. Training of naval cadets was transferred from the Officer Training School to the Naval Academy in 1930, and that of air force cadets to the Air Force Academy the following year.[73] Improvements were also seen in the level of training given to both conscripted and regular army non-commissioned officers.

Despite the attempt by the Hornborg Committee to establish the basis for a coordinated development policy covering all three services, much of the latters' actual development during the late 1920s and subsequently, at least in terms of procurement policy, came to be determined, as a result of parliamentary resistance to

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72. Österman 1966, pp. 61—5; Talvela I 1976, p. 69.
73. Mikola 1961, pp. 60—8, 91—2; Kadettikoulu 1919—1969, pp. 54, 59.

defence budgets matching Hornborg's proposals, on the basis of a series of separate, independent policy decisions. Typical of this was the case of the navy. Opinions were divided from the outset over the type of vessels best suited to Finland's needs, with one lobby pressing for a force of lightly-armoured ships mainly designed for convoy protection duties, and another proposing a force made up of more heavily-armed vessels capable of mounting effective coastal defence operations and, in particular, of ensuring the maritime defence of the Åland Islands. The policy finally chosen and approved by Parliament in 1927 opted in large part for the latter of these two options, and made provision for the construction of a number of submarines, torpedo boats and two heavily-armed small cruisers. This decision, which had been accelerated by the activities of the Naval Association (Laivastoliitto), a pressure group with a large civilian membership committed to the idea of a strong navy as a guarantor of national security, provoked some opposition, particularly within the two other services. The latters' criticism that it was over-ambitious in relation to Finland's needs and would mean robbing the other services of much-needed funds for some time into the future was to no avail, however, once the bill had been passed.[74]

Special problems were attached to the creation and development of the air force. The new service's officer corps, made up of ex-army and navy officers, was faced with an uphill struggle in having to build up a force from scratch with no traditions other than those of the other services to rely on. The difficulty of the task was reflected in the slow and often disorganised and unsystematic way in which ideas on airborne tactics and appropriate aircraft to suit Finnish needs were developed. The net effect of this was the build-up of an unhealthily strong dependence on tactical ideas developed abroad and, particularly during the 1920s, on those current in the French and Italian air forces, both of which favoured an aggressive style of tactical planning making extensive use of bomber formations. Dependency on tactical ideas imported from abroad, and especially French and Italian ones, also inevitably shaped equipment ordering policy, and saw many orders going to French and Italian manufacturers.

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74. Suomen laivasto 1918—1968 I, pp. 143—7.

This attachment to tactical ideas borrowed from abroad and often designed for very different conditions to those likely to be encountered by a Finnish air force, and which was reflected in a tendency to favour purchases of bomber aircraft at the expense of other types, continued until well into the 1930s. As time went on, however, pressure grew within the air force and from the Air Defence Federation (Ilmapuolustusliitto) for resources to be redirected towards fighter aircraft, and for increased attention to be paid to the development of operational tactics designed to meet Finland's own needs.[75] These ideas were nevertheless slow to gain ground and, with equipment expensive to buy and procurement programmes often stretching over a number of years, were slow to make themselves felt, either on the ground or in the air. Changes only really began to appear from the mid-1930s onwards, when increased efforts began to be made to come to grips with the impractically wide range of aircraft which had been built up, and which had severely hampered the development of an effective combat force and coherent training and maintenance programmes.

Funding proved a major and continuing problem for all three services. The ambitious package of recommendations drawn up by Hornborg's defence review committee, in terms of overall defence capability and the levels of manpower and equipment it envisaged, was never taken up in anything like its final form by any government. There was strong parliamentary resistance throughout the 1920s and for much of the 1930s, particularly among the Social Democrats, whose 1930 defence programme, for example, aimed at a very modest level of expenditure, and to a lesser extent among the Agrarians, towards increasing the size of the defence budget to the levels implicitly proposed by Hornborg. What major expenditure that was sanctioned was usually approved on an individual project by project basis, which had the virtue of spreading the financial burden over a longer period than more traditional budget allocations. The armed forces had to wait until virtually the very end of the decade before government proved willing to seriously reassess defence spending and equipment purchasing policy.

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75. Pajari 1971, pp. 256—7; Uola 1975, pp. 197—8, 203, 243—7.

6. Finnish foreign trade in the grip of the depression

Signs of a growing recession began to make themselves felt in Finland in 1928, prior to the international depression, quickly causing the economic expansion characteristic of the latter half of the 1920s to falter. Shortfalls in agricultural production caused by a bad harvest saw the country become dependent on food imports, while abroad, export prospects for Finnish timber began to fall off, reducing export earnings. Together with the continued expansion taking place in the construction industry and the rising amount of foreign loan capital being contracted, these factors contributed to a sudden and sharp deficit in the country's balance of trade, with imports outweighing exports to the tune of 1,768 million marks in 1928 and 520 million marks in 1929.[76] The problems affecting the timber exporting industry were only aggravated by the decline in world prices which took place during 1929, and which saw timber exporters facing major marketing difficulties by the summer of 1930. Sweden and Norway, Finland's major Scandinavian competitors on the international market, had now been joined by the Soviet Union, which had begun to expand its timber exports, a development which only further hampered Finland's export potential. Increasing difficulties were also experienced by the country's pulp exporters.[77] At a time when the timber processing and paper industries accounted for some 85% of Finland's total export earnings, any downturn in these areas inevitably had a major effect on the health of the economy as a whole. This problem was only further highlighted as world prices for timber and related products tumbled to new lows during 1931 and 1932.

The deflationary fiscal policies followed by the various governments of the period led to sharp falls in wage levels. With the trade union movement weak and unable to muster any effective resistance to the downward pressure on wages, these fell by as much as 30% in some sectors of the economy. Forestry workers and the unskilled and semi-skilled labour force were hit particularly badly, although those employed in the paper industry

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76. Halme 1955, pp. 252, 256.
77. Ibid., pp. 234—7, 244—7.

were able to avoid the worst effects of the decline and suffered only small losses of earnings. Unemployment caused by the halt of the minor urban construction boom, fuelled by the earlier period of economic expansion, and by the fall-off in forestry work in rural areas, also rose. While Finland's relatively low level of industrialisation compared to many of her competitors served to restrict the extent of many of the knock-on effects of the depression, such as unemployment, it could not offer complete protection, as reflected in the short-term unemployment peak of 92,000 reached during the winter of 1931–32. Government reaction to this sudden rise in the number of unemployed was slow, consisting mainly of the introduction of a small number of public works projects designed to alleviate the worst effects of the problem; no system of publicly-funded unemployment benefit payments existed.[78] The depression also had far-reaching effects on the farming population, which suffered substantial economic hardship as a result of the downturn in timber sales, and felling and logging, which traditionally represented an important part of farmers' income. To counterbalance the effect of the general fall in international agricultural commodity prices and in an effort to maintain food exports, a system of export support payments, covering butter, cheese, bacon and eggs, which together had accounted for over 10% of the country's total exports during the latter half of the 1920s, was introduced to complement the increased tariffs on grain imports which had been imposed in 1929.[79]

Against this background of severe export difficulties, the government was forced to consider radical action to improve the mark's international value and to ease the strain on the economy. Given the fact that some 40% of the country's exports went to Britain and that sterling was used as a reference currency in two-thirds of the country's trading agreements, Britain's decision in September 1931 to abandon the gold standard and devalue sterling's value by some 30%, followed by the decision of the three Scandinavian countries a week latter to follow suit and leave the gold standard and significantly devalue their currencies, left Finland with little real choice but to decide on a similar move.

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78. Siipi 1967, pp. 83—7.
79. Virrankoski 1975, p. 198.

Anything else would have given Sweden and Norway a powerful price advantage over Finnish producers on the timber and timber-related market in Britain, and Denmark a similar advantage in the agricultural sector.[80]

The slump also saw the emergence of a new emphasis in the handling of Finland's foreign trade relations, in the shape of a closer association between private industry and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the diplomatic service. Relations between the two had previously been relatively cool and distant. The depression, in fact, had a powerful impact on Finnish diplomacy and day to day diplomatic work. The rise in the importance of commercial questions and advancing Finnish commercial interests abroad, and the growing necessity of keeping abreast of the flood of new regulations and restrictions imposed by national governments in response to the slump, superceded many traditional diplomatic concerns.[81] This did not prevent the diplomatic service, however, from feeling some of the chill winds of belt-tightening imposed by the depression, albeit slightly late in the day, in 1933, when some limited short-term cuts in personnel were implemented.[82]

With the strengthening of protectionism and the introduction of new national tariffs and other restrictions on free trade by many of Finland's trading partners, the government was forced to take on a larger role commensurate with the trend towards regulating and controlling the level of foreign trade through official commercial agreements. Industry alone was no longer in a position to dictate the pattern of exports as it had tried to before, but now had to work hand in hand, however reluctantly, with government. The maintenance of commercial ties with Finland's main trading partners was of primary importance for the government in seeing the economy through the strained economic climate imposed by the depression. Regular government-sponsored trade negotiations came to assume an important role in the maintenance of the country's international relations. Before any formal talks were

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80. N. Meinander 1964, pp. 76, 79.
81. See Holma's letter of 7.3.1936 to Antti Hackzell (Hackzell collection), and Holma's reports to the Foreign Ministry, for ex. dated 29.4. and 15.5.1933 (UM 5 C 6).
82. Paasivirta 1968, pp. 198—201; *Suomen Ulkomaankauppa* 15.11.1933.

begun the main aspects of each potential agreement were discussed by a joint government and industry committee responsible for trade agreement issues, made up of representatives culled from the Foreign Ministry, the timber and paper processing industries, the Finnish Export Association and the Central Association of Agricultural Producers. Representatives from each of these groups were also typically present at subsequent official discussions. This new approach served to coordinate export interests and assist the overall marketing of Finnish goods, and helped focus minds in industry and government alike on general marketing issues and on the advantages to be gained from cooperation between the public and private sectors in this field.[83] Within the Foreign Ministry, this increased emphasis on formal trade agreements was accompanied by an expansion in the size of its trade agreement department and the setting up in 1933 of a new department to handle economic policy affairs and coordinate the exchange of commercial information. The former of these two departments became especially powerful, acting as a link between the government of the day, export industries and those involved in the actual business of hammering out the details of each agreement.[84]

The increasing reliance of government and industry on bilateral trade agreements and related arrangements in regulating the country's commercial relations inevitably led to Finland's coming to suffer, in increasing measure, the negative effects of the slump affecting the Western world's industrialised countries. Economic difficulties and dislocations in Finland's export markets in Western and Central Europe came to have a dominant role in shaping Finland's economic prospects, as Finland steadily found herself forced to adapt her economic planning to take increasing account of the state of the economies in her major trading partners.

The chill wind of recession was most keenly felt in trade with Finland's two dominant partners, Britain and Germany. Maintaining long-term trading ties with Britain, the country's single largest export market for timber and related products and agricultural produce, was of central importance. Discussions were

83. Paasivirta 1968, p. 216.
84. Ibid., pp. 216—8.

put in hand by the Central Association of Finnish Forest Industries with similar organisations in Scandinavia in a bid to work out joint pricing agreements and ways of limiting production.[85] The holding of the Ottawa conference in the summer of 1932 between Britain and the Commonwealth and Empire countries on ways of protecting their joint trade, together with Britain's decision shortly previously to begin trade negotiations with the three other major Scandinavian countries, only underlined the need for Finland to make some move towards securing future Anglo-Finnish trade and to prevent Finland's possibly finding herself economically isolated and shut out from her important markets. The Sunila-led government responded to this by increasing contacts with the British authorities and introducing a policy of directing an increasing number of state contracts and official borrowing towards Britain and British industry.[86] Direct trade discussions between the two countries, however, were only begun in earnest in the summer of 1933, after the other Anglo-Scandinavian trade agreements had already been finalised.

Agreement was reached between the two sides on a new Anglo-Finnish trade agreement relatively quickly, and an agreement signed on 29 September. Under this, Finland was granted the status of most favoured nation, in line with Sweden, Norway and Denmark, thus effectively maintaining Finland's overall competitiveness in relation to her closest major competitors, an issue which had been uppermost in the minds of the Finnish negotiators. As a result of the previous imbalance in trade between the two countries in Finland's favour, however, Finland was forced to make some concessions in response to Britain's desire to see increased British exports to Finland. Finland agreed to reduce her tariffs on imports of British cotton and woollen products, and to various compensation purchases, and to give priority to purchases of British coal.[87] Having already signed trade agreements with the three Scandinavian countries, Britain was well-placed to bring pressure to bear on a Finland keen not to undermine her substantial exports to her most important trading partner. While

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85. Kertomukset Suomen Puunjalostusteollisuuden Keskusliiton toiminnasta v. 1931 ja 1932 (SMKL archive).
86. Hbl 24.7.1932; Mylly 1978, p. 239.
87. On the Finnish-British trade agreement, see VP 1933 ak, n. 40.

Finland had every cause to be satisfied with the eventual agreement arrived at, some figures within the business community, among them Axel Solitander, head of the powerful Central Association of Finnish Forest Industries, nevertheless remained critical of what was seen as the high price that had had to be paid.[88]

Following the ratification of the Anglo-Finnish agreement, attention turned towards the question of trade relations with Germany. A central role in German policy from the outset of the depression had been played by efforts aimed at encouraging an increase in economic self-sufficiency and reducing Germany's dependency on imports. Among other victims of this policy had been the outline Finnish-German trade agreement negotiated in 1930, implementation of which was halted at Germany's insistence. German calls for a revision of the agreement were particularly concentrated on reducing the levels of Finnish agricultural exports to Germany.[89] Hitler's rise to power marked a further intensification in this overall German policy and a hardening of attitudes towards the country's trading partners. This new German policy on trade issues came as an unpleasant surprise for many within conservative circles in Finland, otherwise well-disposed towards the political changes that had taken place in Germany. A foretaste of Germany's new policy and of the difficulties likely to confront Finnish exporters in trying to safeguard their position on the German market was given by the agreement on agricultural imports signed between Germany and Holland in the autumn of 1933, which significantly reduced German import quotas on a number of Dutch goods, in some cases by as much as 60% on previous figures.[90]

Much of the German case for a revised trade agreement with Finland, aimed at securing what were seen as Germany's justified export interests, put forward by German negotiators during the course of talks with their Finnish counterparts, focused on the concessions Finland had made to British exporters under the

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88. US 4.10.1933. Also see Axel Solitander's memorandum dated 26.9.1933 (SMKL archive).
89. Suomen Puunjalostusteollisuuden Keskusliiton toimintakertomus v. 1930 (SMKL archive).
90. *Kauppalehti* 6.10.1933.

Anglo-Finnish trade agreement signed shortly previously. Demands were made for the inclusion of similar provisions for German industry, even though trade between Germany and Finland had been running in Germany's favour for over a decade. The disquiet and irritation this awoke in Helsinki deepened in the wake of the unfavourable comment on Finnish-German trade prospects which appeared in a number of German papers, including the respected *Berliner Börsen Courier,* emphasising Finland's status as a source of agricultural products and raw materials. It was argued, in fact, that Finland should agree to purchase large quantities of German industrial products.[91] The inability of either side in the negotiations to compromise led to a virtual breakdown in trade relations at the beginning of 1934, with bilateral trade reduced to operating without the backup of any official regulatory agreement and hampered by a spate of hastily-imposed import bans introduced by both governments. Finland was nevertheless far from being an exceptional case in this respect, as none of the other Scandinavian countries enjoyed significantly better trading relations with Germany at this time. Through the introduction of a system of protective tariffs, Germany attempted to limit her purchases from Finland to only those products either not available from domestic producers or not in sufficient quantities, such as sulfate pulp, birch and plywood products and unsawn timber. This was in line with general German policy aimed at reducing imports of industrial products and finished goods from abroad to a minimum and encouraging imports of raw materials and semi-finished goods, and limiting agricultural imports to bolster domestic farming.

The eventual trade agreement concluded between Germany and Finland in March 1934 saw Finland having to bow to a number of the German demands that had been put forward during the chequered course of the preceding trade negotiations. More importantly, however, Finland was able to maintain her sizeable export trade in timber and agricultural products, albeit only under a strict quota system. Little attempt was made to hide the compromise nature of the agreement from the Finnish point of

91. *Berliner Börsen Courier* 27.10.1933; *Berliner Tageblatt* 22.12.1933; US 1.11., 9.12.1933.

view, with the difficult circumstances surrounding the negotiations being particularly emphasised in its defence. Given these difficulties, however, F. M. Pitkäniemi, head of Valio, the State Dairy Authority, and one of those who had taken part in the discussions, probably reflected something of a more general feeling that Finland had acquitted herself relatively well when he described the agreement as guaranteeing a much higher level of agricultural and timber product exports than had been generally thought possible prior to the talks.[92] The new agreement, however, was to remain in force only until the end of 1934.

The difficulties encountered by Finnish exporters in the wake of the depression forced an extensive reassessment within industry of the country's export effort and export markets, as part of an attempt to find new ways of expanding, diversifying and developing the country's exports. Within the timber processing industry, attention was directed towards developing new export markets in South America, with Argentina and Brazil being seen as favourable possibilities, to supplement the United States market, which had been developed during the 1920s. Paper exports to South America as a whole, in fact, began to show signs of modest growth from the early 1930s onwards, a development reflected in the visit made by Hjalmar Procopé in 1935, in his role as director of the Finnish Paper Producers' Association (Finnpap), to a number of South American countries.[93]

Efforts were also made outside the traditional timber and paper industries to diversify exports and make Finland less reliant on only one or two key industries. This was particularly reflected in the activities of the reorganised Finnish Export Association, which took as its focal aim improving the level of cooperation between industry, agriculture and exporters. By sponsoring a wide range of market studies, including a number on non-European markets, and a selection of foreign-language publications directed at possible

92. HS 29.3.1934; Hbl 29.3.1934; *Mercator* 13.4.1934; Suomen Puunjalostusteollisuuden Keskusliiton toimintakertomus v. 1934 (SMKL archive); US 28.4.1934.
93. See Bror Serlachius' travel report for the spring of 1938 (Suomen Paperitehtaitten Yhdistyksen kiertokirje 54/1938, SMKL archive) and Hjalmar Procopé's report for the autumn of 1935 (SPTY:n kiertokirje 96/ and 114/1935 SMKL archive).

purchasers of Finnish exports abroad, the Association hoped to help broaden exporters' horizons and be able to provide up-to-date information on new marketing opportunities, as well as keep industry abroad aware of developments within Finland.[94] Results in terms of increased exports and new markets for Finnish products would, it was nevertheless recognised, take time to come to fruition.

Timber and timber-related exports began to show signs of recovery in the wake of the mark's devaluation at the end of 1931, and by the autumn of the following year clear indications of a wider upswing began to be visible in the economy as a whole. Once under way, this recovery soon gained momentum, to such an extent that by 1933 overall national income exceeded the peak which it had reached just prior to the depression in 1928.[95] The general improvement which took part in export prospects and the growth in export income were to have a powerful influence on the pattern of the country's economic development and growth. The increased profitability of the country's export industries was also aided by the extensive rationalisation which took place within these industries and the low relative levels of pay enjoyed by their workforces. The country's improved export performance, however, was only slow to have an effect on the overall economy, largely as a result of government decisions between 1931 and 1935 to use a large proportion of the healthy balance of trade surpluses built up over these years, in all amounting to some 6,000 million marks, in reducing the national debt. Thanks to this policy, virtually all short-term loans were completely paid off by the end of 1933, while the bulk of long-term loans were completely paid off by the end of the decade.[96] Admirable in itself, this siphoning-off of capital, however, inevitably slowed the rate of investment, which in turn put a brake on economic expansion. While this did not prevent industrial production in 1936, for example, rising some 40% above the previous peak level achieved in 1929 and national income rising around 10% above the 1928 peak, neither the forestry industry nor the construction industry proved capable

94. Paasivirta 1968, pp. 213—4; Tollet 1969, pp. 7—12, 16.
95. Halme 1955, p. 284.
96. Ibid., p. 286.

of improving on the record figures achieved, in terms of volume of output, in the latter years of the 1920s, making it difficult to speak of any general or powerful upswing in the Finnish economy during this period.

7. Foreign reaction to the Finland of the early 1930s

The picture built up of Finland abroad during the course of the 1920s was very much one of a peaceful country which had been successful in consolidating its new international position and one lacking many of the less-admired characteristics of some of the other new independent states of post-war Europe. This largely positive image owed at least part of its existence to the fact that very little dramatic or of significant import for the outside world took place in Finland during the 1920s. On the other hand, this did little to expand the modest and restricted knowledge which existed abroad concerning Finland's political climate and social conditions. The only country which formed any real exception to this general pattern was Sweden, where events in Finland were regularly followed in the press. Finland's geographical position on the periphery of Europe, and which by itself often hampered better contacts with the rest of Europe, was compounded by the fact that few countries possessed any direct interests in the Finnish area. Among the new independent European countries, Poland and Czechoslovakia were the source of most interest in the West. Similarly, in the case of the Soviet Union, interest tended to be focused further south on Central Europe. Lapua changed all that. The emergence of powerful extra-parliamentary activity in the summer of 1930 rapidly drew foreign attention to Finland, which suddenly became associated, if only temporarily, with the other unsettled newly-independent states. The Lapua movement, with its strong and unequivocal anti-communist philosophy, proved the subject of a surprisingly varied assortment of interpretations in the European press, with events surrounding its activities being linked to developments and trends outside Finland in widely different ways.

The movement met with some sympathy from conservative

circles in Germany, partly as a result of its identification with the struggle against the communist threat, and partly as it came to be seen as being backed, or at least inspired, by the same circles which had been behind pro-German policies and the introduction of a monarchy back in 1918.[97] Comment from within more moderate sections of German opinion was significantly more critical, reflecting many of the political tensions and developments existing within Germany itself at the time, and particularly the growing strength of opposition to the Weimar régime. The Social Democrats, together with the Liberals, did not hide their dislike and suspicion of the activities and long-term intentions of the Lapua activists, activities which were described by *Vorwärts* as amounting to a campaign of fascist terror.[98] The chain of events set in motion by the Right was seen as potentially likely to lead to a coup d'état in Finland and the establishment of some form of dictatorship committed to eliminating parliamentary government.

Among the major British papers to cover Lapua, *The Times* mainly concerned itself with the anti-communist aspects of events, with commentators tending to attempt to relate them to developments elsewhere. The apparent resurgence of communist activity in Finland was seen as clear evidence of Soviet influence in Finnish affairs, and all moves aimed at halting further communist expansion were seen, in principle, as justified. While the anti-communist activities focused around the Lapua organisation were thus viewed positively, at least initially, by *The Times,* the paper's commentators were decidedly more cautious in expressing any sympathy with the violent methods which came to characterise the movement. Particularly interesting with regard to the paper's coverage of Finnish affairs at the time was the care with which Soviet reaction to events in Finland was noted, both in the form of the various notes sent to the Finnish government by the Soviet authorities and in the editorial comment on developments in Finland which appeared in the Soviet press.[99]

The coverage given in the liberal *Manchester Guardian* was a complete contrast to that found in *The Times.* The former

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97. *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* 8.7., 12.7., 23.7.1930; *Kölnische Zeitung* 5.7., 7.7., 27.7.1930.
98. *Vorwärts* 3.7.1930; *Frankfurter Zeitung* 8.7.1930.
99. *The Times* 13.6., 5.7., 7.7., 18.7., 12.9., 18.9.1930.

described the movement as unambiguously fascist in nature and intent, and as such a threat to democracy and political freedoms in Finland. The peasants' march on Helsinki was described in similar vein as fascist-organised, and compared in very general terms with the events which had surrounded Mussolini's march on Rome in 1922. Fascism's success in Finland was also seen by the paper as potentially likely to adversely effect the political climate in the border states to the south of Finland. The forming of a new government under Svinhufvud in July 1930 was described as only likely to bode further ill for Finland. The *Guardian's* identification of the Lapua movement as a quasi-fascist, if not wholly fascist organisation was also taken up in the Labour Party paper *The Daily Herald,* which drew its readers' attention to the threats made against members of the Finnish Parliament by Lapua activists and the various kidnappings of leading political figures which took place at the time.[100]

The limited comment on the Lapua movement and the events surrounding it which appeared in the leading French papers was strongly coloured by anti-Bolshevist sentiments and reflected a degree of sympathy with the overall aims of the movement's leaders. Events in Finland were also tied into developments within the wider international perspective, with Finnish extra-parliamentary activity being variously interpreted as signifying a setback for the Soviet Union, in terms of its attempts to extend its sphere of influence, and as part of an international campaign against Comintern.[101]

Swedish interest in Finnish events, which had always been consistently higher than in much of the rest of Europe, reflecting Sweden's geographical and geopolitical proximity to Finland, reached something of a peak during the summer of 1930. Indicative of the wide coverage given to Finnish affairs at this point was the fact that, at the time of the peasants' march in July 1930, the Stockholm papers carried, in addition to their daily extensive news stories on developments in Finland, two or three major editorials a week devoted to discussion of the situation.

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100. *Manchester Guardian* 4.7., 5.7., 7.7., 19.7.1930; *Daily Herald* 7.7.1930.
101. *Journal des Débats* 6.7.1930; *Le Matin* 15.11.1930. See also Holma's letters of 4.8.1930 to Ingman and Eino Suolahti (Ingman collection III, Eino Suolahti collection 2).

While developments in Finland had up until then been looked upon relatively favourably, the implications of events inspired by the Lapua movement led many Swedish commentators to conclude that they might have been overly generous in their earlier assessments of Finland's political future.

Comment in the country's leading papers was largely strongly critical of the Lapua movement and its activities from the start, with only the more conservative press forming a modest exception to this. This hostility was particularly prominent across virtually the whole spectrum of the socialist and liberal press. *Social-Demokraten* linked developments in Finland with the events of 1918, describing the country as being in the grip of a White terror, inspired by forces committed to overthrowing the democratic order. *Social-Demokraten* feared that the latter might be successful in completely supplanting the parliamentary form of government and that Finland might then fall into the hands of what it rhetorically described as a 'Finnish Mussolini'.[102] Similar attitudes and comments also appeared in other social democrat papers. Writing in *Ny Tid,* Per Albin Hansson expressed his conviction that the political upheavals being experienced in Finland could undermine and ultimately break the sense of solidarity existing between Finland and the other Nordic countries. The views expressed in the moderate *Dagens Nyheter* ran along similar lines, with the Lapua movement being described as committed to opposing the continuance of parliamentary government and to restricting cultural freedoms and, as such, representing the threat of a Finnish dictatorship along the lines of that existing in Mussolini's Italy.[103] Reaction to the Lapua movement was decidedly more mixed among the conservative press. While *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* was critical of a number of developments in Finland, such as the anti-communist legislation, which it considered as undemocratic and as likely to undermine foreign confidence in Finland, papers like *Svenska Dagbladet, Sydsvenska Dagbladet* and *Aftonbladet* proved much more understanding of the motives of those involved in the Lapua

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102. Soc-Dem 15.6., 29.6., 1.7., 6.7.1930.
103. *Ny Tid* 23.6., 8.7.1930; *Arbetet* 18.6.1930; DN 8.7., 16.7., 24.7.1930.

movement, and defended their actions.[104]

All in all, Lapua served to refocus the pattern of Swedish press interest in Finland. During the 1920s, attention and comment had largely concentrated on a relatively narrow range of issues centred around the language dispute and related questions, but from 1930 onwards coverage expanded to embrace virtually the whole range of Finnish domestic politics. This was particularly evident in the case of the 1931 presidential election, the Mäntsälä incident and the 1933 parliamentary elections, which all received wide coverage in Sweden.[105]

Finnish domestic tensions in the early 1930s were also the subject of comment in the Soviet press, reflecting official disquiet with developments. The various events of 1930 were given limited coverage by both *Pravda* and *Izvestia,* mainly in the shape of analyses and interpretations of the background factors identified as lying behind the troubles. Two aspects were particularly highlighted in Moscow: the strong anti-communist aims of the Lapua movement and the upswing which took place in the activities of the various nationalist organisations committed to developing closer links within the Finno-Ugrian cultural community. British anti-Soviet machinations were identified by a number of Soviet commentators as being at work behind the scenes in Finnish politics. Suspicion of British involvement was coupled to that directed at everything which was seen as pointing to a possible reawakening of closer contacts between Finland and the border states.[106]

The various kidnappings carried out by Lapua activists of their political opponents and their dumping across the Soviet-Finnish border particularly riled the Soviet authorities, and resulted in the dispatch of an official note of protest to the Finnish government. Moscow obviously hoped that the latter would disassociate itself

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104. NDA 17.6., 1.7., 16.10.1930; SvD 3.7., 6.7., 16.7.1930; *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* 11.7.1930; Abl 2.7., 5.7.1930. See also Eirik Hornborg's letter of 18.4.1932 to Nils Ahnlund (Ahnlund collection) and Herman Gummerus: Dagbok 27.9., 13.10.1930.

105. DN 17.2.1931; Soc-Dem 17.2.1931; StT 17.2.1931; Abl 14.1.1931; NDA 17.2.1931; Soc-Dem 3.3.1932; *Ny Tid* 1.3.1932; DN 11.7.1933; StT 11.7.1933; Soc-Dem 11.7.1933.

106. Korhonen I 1966, pp. 201—3.

from any support for the Lapua movement and its anti-Soviet opinions, but this the Finnish authorities refused to do. Ultimately, however, the Soviet administration proved more concerned over Finnish reaction, particularly prominent on the Right, to the events in Ingria associated with collectivisation and the forced transfers of the local population which took place in its wake. The Finnish government's decision, after some hesitation, to bow to internal domestic pressure and send an official note to Moscow complaining of the treatment of the Ingrian population was a particularly unwelcome development for the Soviet authorities. The Soviet reaction was sharp and swift, as there was no wish to allow Finland to be seen to be interfering in Soviet internal affairs.[107] Given the sensitivity of the issue, it would not be unreasonable to suppose that Finland's decision to press ahead with an official protest over the matter could well have had a long-term unfavourable influence on Soviet views towards Finland.

The friction in Soviet-Finnish relations generated by the Lapua and Ingrian issues was nevertheless not allowed to get in the way when the question of a non-aggression treaty between the two countries again came for discussion, allowing a pact to be signed after what was only a relatively short period of discussion in January 1932. This rapid conclusion of the treaty question owed a fair deal to the parallel discussions taking place at the same time between the Soviet Union and Poland and the other border states. Although the attempts on the part of the Finnish government to delay ratification, in the hope of being able to coordinate the Soviet-Finnish treaty with the other agreements under discussion must have been noted in Moscow, so undoubtedly was Finland's essential willingness to see the treaty through. This was indirectly reflected in the sudden fall-off which took place in critical Soviet press comment on the internal situation in Finland prior to Finnish ratification, which eventually took place in July 1932. This even extended to the Mäntsälä incident, which received only the most minimal coverage in a few short news items.[108]

The quickening pace of change in Europe typical of the post-1933 period, together with the shift which took place in Soviet

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107. Ibid., pp. 213—5.
108. Ibid., pp. 234—40.

diplomacy towards a more active role in promoting proposals for guaranteeing security in Eastern Europe, saw Soviet policy towards Finland enter on a new stage. Increased Soviet interest was matched by a similar upswing in interest in Finland among the other major powers.

VII Finland and Europe Overshadowed by Crisis — The Second Half of the 1930s

1. Increased tension and deteriorating international relations

The foundations of the post-war European balance of power, in the shape of the Versailles Peace and the other treaty agreements which had been introduced at the end of the First World War, came under growing pressure as the decade progressed and particularly from 1933 onwards, following Hitler's rise to power in Germany. Parallel to the escalation of these destabilising factors, the status of the League of Nations also began to decline substantially, as European politics become increasingly dominated by deepening ideological disagreements.

The impact of the change of government in Germany on wider developments in Europe was not immediate, however, as the early years of the new administration in Germany were largely taken up with domestic issues and consolidating the new government's hold on power. The latter's commitment to working towards a rewriting of the Versailles-based European order was nevertheless obvious, and a number of low-key proposals hinting at the possibility of negotiations to this end were made early on. Germany's departure from the League of Nations and withdrawal from the Geneva disarmament talks in the autumn of 1933 could

have left no one in any doubt of the shift that had taken place in German attitudes, and of the new government's hostility to the multilateral approach to handling European problems represented by the League. Germany's treaty of friendship signed with Poland the following year, serving as it did to unbalance the existing network of alliance agreements, only underlined this. Signs of German movement towards a new style of foreign policy became only really apparent, however, from the spring of 1935 onwards, in the wake of the introduction of general conscription and the beginning of development work on a new German air force, which together marked the virtual end of any German pretence at respecting the remaining restrictions imposed by the Versailles Peace. Against this show of German determination, the two major Western powers, France and Britain, proved unable to find a common base for a shared foreign policy strategy capable of seriously challenging these developments. France, hampered by domestic troubles, found herself faced with the disintegration of her security policy and alliance network developed since 1919. Britain, for her part, declined to take any firm stand, believing that a reduction in tension could be achieved through a policy of concessions to German demands, signing a naval agreement with Germany in the summer of 1935, under which she virtually agreed to give up her interests in the Baltic.

Developments in the international situation and particularly Italy's intervention in Abyssinia, together with the League of Nation's decision to introduce economic sanctions against Italy as a result, served to divert the focus of international interest away from the German question. The League and the Western powers suffered a further blow to their prestige and international standing when Germany was able to take economic advantage of the sanctions and used the opportunity to occupy the Rhineland in the spring of 1936, thereby improving her strategic position. The strategic potential of the Continent's two fascist powers was only further consolidated following the establishment of a close alliance relationship between Rome and Berlin, largely as a result of Italy's desire to reduce her increasing international isolation. France, in a bid to underpin her shaky position, and against the opposition of a significant section of conservative and moderate opinion, and in spite of the doubts about the Red Army's combative capabilities felt within the French Army, signed a

military agreement with the Soviet Union in 1935.[1] The practical value of this Franco-Soviet treaty, however, was put into question from its very inception following Poland's refusal to grant the Red Army any right of transit across Polish territory in the event of an international crisis.

Uppermost in Stalin's interpretation of developments in 1933 seems to have been the view that Hitler's rise to power represented only a transitional stage in German developments, a last-ditch attempt to rescue the German capitalist system from collapse, and one which would be followed by a communist-inspired revolution.[2] Events during the course of 1934, however, led Stalin to abandon this view, and saw the Soviet Union drop much of its earlier hostility towards the League of Nations, becoming a member of the organisation during the autumn, and under Litvinov adopt a more active stance towards developing a system of collective security. The Soviet authorities also accelerated reform and modernisation of the country's armed forces.

Comintern, which as late as 1934 continued to stress the importance of national communist parties maintaining their distance from competing socialist parties, also moved towards a less isolationist policy. At its seventh congress held in the summer of 1935, the organisation adopted a new policy calling for the formation of popular front alliances, made up of left of centre non-socialists together with socialists and communists, to spearhead the fight against the spread of fascism. The Soviet Union underlined the importance of developing collective cooperation within the framework provided by the League of Nations, and increased its efforts to improve Soviet relations with the Western powers. Considerable doubt existed within the Soviet leadership, however, as to the extent of the West's determination to commit itself to opposing German expansion. There was particular uncertainty over how the Western powers might react to possible future attempts by Hitler to expand the German sphere of influence in the East; the Soviet suspicion being that they would do little to halt it. The ideological distance separating the Soviet Union from the Western democracies, and the focus of Stalin's policy on

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1. Mauru 1967, pp. 212—3, 220—1; Kennan 1961, p. 303; Holborn 1966, p.141; Renouvin VIII 1958 p. 90; Duroselle 1979, pp. 140—1, 287.
2. Kennan 1961, p. 228; Deutscher 1978, ppl 347—8.

securing Soviet defence interests, inevitably served to hamper the development of closer relations and any real measure of cooperation between the Soviet Union and the West against the general threat to European security posed by an increasingly aggressive and self-confident Germany.[3] The political trials of old Bolshevik leaders and high-ranking military figures held between 1936 and 1938 to eliminate what remained of internal party opposition to Stalin, by virtue of their scale and the harsh sentences imposed, only deepened Western hostility. In addition to their other aims, the purges can also be seen as having been partly motivated by a desire on Stalin's part to increase his room for manoeuvre on foreign policy issues.[4]

Further realignment took place within Europe in 1936, dictated by changing great power interests and various ideological factors. The closer ties which developed along the Berlin-Rome axis reflected the general dissatisfaction felt in both Germany and Italy towards the balance of power in the region, while the development of links between Germany and Japan reflected an attempt to counterbalance the Soviet-French alliance. The eruption of the Spanish Civil War in July 1936, following General Franco's decision to challenge the popular front government, only served to consolidate the deepening division between the Axis and non-Axis countries within Europe. Britain, followed by France, adopted a policy of non-involvement in Spanish affairs, while Italy and Germany decided to support Franco and began supplying arms and other assistance to Franco's forces from October 1936 onwards. In an attempt to prevent any further growth in the influence of the Axis powers or at the least to delay it, the Soviet Union stepped into the fray by promising assistance to the republican forces. Soviet aid, in the shape of large shipments of military equipment, continued at a significant level until the early months of 1937, when a more cautionary approach was adopted.[5]

The Axis powers were not slow to exploit both the Franco-Soviet alliance agreement and the Soviet involvement in Spain in their propaganda underlining the communist threat facing Europe.

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3. Kennan 1961, pp. 312—3.
4. Deutscher 1978, pp. 322—4; Kennan 1961, p. 305.
5. Carr 1973, pp. 260—1; Kennan 1961, pp. 308—11.

Their own active involvement in events in Spain served to establish their growing role as a powerful force in international politics and as significant military powers. This was only underscored when set against the low-key and essentially passive role adopted by the Western governments, despite the widespread popular sentiment aroused among liberal and socialist circles in the latter countries in support of the republican cause. With the political influence and military might of the Axis powers clearly in the ascendant, the Western powers found themselves increasingly forced on the defensive in response to the formers' mounting pressure for changes in their favour in the international system. This was particularly evident in the change which took place in French fortunes and the attendant decline in France's international position, with the crumbling of the post-war status quo. French influence began to falter badly in Eastern and Central Europe, being replaced by the growing economic and political influence wielded by Germany. Symptomatic of this development was the slow collapse of the Eastern Entente, which began in 1933 and continued for the rest of the decade.[6]

Parallel to these changes taking place in the international balance in the West, the Soviet Union was continuing to expand and develop into a potent power, but in virtual isolation. Heavy industry continued to dominate Soviet economic thinking, as it had done from the time of the introduction of the first five-year plan, with the emphasis now shifting to Siberia. Light industry and the service sector enjoyed a much less central role in economic planning. The 1930s in fact marked the emergence of the Soviet Union as a modern industrial power, a fact reflected in the growth of the proportion of the population employed in industry to some 35% by 1937. This consolidation of the industrial base also provided significant new opportunities for improving and expanding the Soviet Union's military capability. Economic expansion was accompanied by a new sense of national confidence and a new emphasis on the achievements of past Russian figures, such as Alexander Nevsky and Peter the Great. The increase sense of confidence felt within government and the party was also reflected in the new constitution introduced in 1936

6. Reichart 1971, pp. 121—3, 125—32, 138; Renouvin VIII 1958, pp. 99, 153.

which, departing from previous communist practice, enfranchised the entire population, irrespective of social status. Political power nevertheless continued to be increasingly concentrated at the centre and in the person of Stalin, a trend which only intensified following the widespread purges instituted around mid-decade.[7] The growing dictatorial nature of Stalin's leadership, together with the general ideological gulf dividing the Soviet Union from the major powers of Western Europe, aggravated relations between the West and the Soviet Union, effectively preventing any revival of the alliance relationship which had existed prior to 1918, or the development of any comparable agreement designed to contain German expansion.

For the Western powers, developments on the international stage were proving increasingly problematical. Finding herself steadily more isolated following the failure of her alliance network to withstand changing developments and faced with the rapid decline of her influence in Europe, France turned her attention to securing her immediate defence interests, beginning an extensive policy of reinforcing her forces along her eastern border with Germany and strengthening the Maginot Line. This policy was further reinforced following the forming of a new popular front government in 1936 under Léon Blum and Edouard Daladier. France's decision to concentrate on interests closer to home and avoid overstretching her resources was paralleled by Britain's policy of avoiding committing herself to any alliance relationship in Europe. It was believed in Britain that, given time and careful negotiation, German interest in European cooperation and respect for international agreements could be restored. Given her poor level of military preparedness on the ground and in the air, Britain had every reason to want to prevent the situation in Europe deteriorating to the stage where armed conflict would become inevitable. Her military weakness prevented the adoption of a more determined, active style of foreign policy. A British decision to sanction increased defence spending only came in 1937. Britain's cautionary foreign policy in Europe was also indirectly influenced by her problems and interests outside the area. It was

7. Deutscher 1978, p. 327.

also feared in Britain that a possible major war on the scale of the 1914-1918 conflict would lead, not only to major economic disruption, but also to social disorder.[8]

1937 marked something of a pause in developments in Continental Europe. Pressure continued to build up apace, however, while the prospect of being able to effectively defuse it appeared increasingly remote. The gulf between the aims and policies pursued in the foreign policy field by the Axis powers on the one hand and the Western democracies on the other deepened all the time. German policy under Hitler had by this stage become increasingly strongly nationalistically-coloured and dominated by the idea of a Greater Germany, capable of providing Germany with adequate national borders. Plans for the annexation of Austria and the transference of sovereignty over the German-speaking Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia to Germany were put before the German military and political leadership by Hitler in November 1937. These were complemented by policy outlines covering the extension of German power and influence beyond the borders of German-speaking areas.[9]

Domestic opinion within Germany, encouraged by National Socialist propaganda and a more general desire to see the wrongs wrought by Versailles righted, had increasingly come to accept the legitimacy of using military pressure and force of arms as a means of achieving Germany's political objectives, and the importance of stepping up the ideological struggle against the mixture of threats posed by Marxism, the Jewish conspiracy, parliamentary democracy and liberalism. This shift was reflected in the moves taken against those within the political and military establishments who had shown themselves less than enthusiastic towards the new and openly expansionist policies. At the beginning of 1938, a number of more moderate figures, including Generals von Blomberg and von Fritsch, both of whom had expressed the view that Germany was not sufficiently militarily prepared for large-scale military campaigns, were removed from office. The director of the State Bank, Hjalmar Schacht, and the Foreign Minister, K. von

8. Rock 1977, pp. 45—51.
9. Bracher VI 1975, pp. 178—9.

Neurath, were also replaced; the latter's place being taken by von Ribbentrop.[10]

The German occupation of Austria in March 1938, while in line with general German intentions to shake off the unwelcome impedimenta of the post-war status quo, also marked the beginning of a process of German expansion eastward. Czechoslovakia, which found itself dangerously exposed following the Anschluss and now represented the last remaining pillar in the French system of alliance in Eastern Europe, was soon subjected to German pressure, in the shape of German demands, nominally based on calls by the German-speaking population of the area for its unification with Germany, for transference of the Sudetenland to German jurisdiction. Britain's attempts to achieve a compromise solution, under which Czechoslovakia would have agreed to grant extensive local autonomy to the Sudetenland in return for Germany dropping her demands, eventually came to nothing. Lacking any real promise of Western backing, the Prague government came to the conclusion that it had little option but to accede to the German proposal. Against the backdrop of continuing German threats of military action, the Munich agreement finalising the division of Czechoslovakia was signed on 29 September 1938 between Germany, Italy, France and Britain. This agreement effectively confirmed Germany's dominant position in Central Europe, while at the same time underlining the continuing inability of the West, the Soviet Union having been excluded from the Munich talks, to coordinate resistance to German expansion and to protect the interests of the Continent's smaller states.[11]

2. The domestic political climate

The period between 1932 and 1935 represented one of a cautious return to something approaching political equilibrium, following the successful repulse of the right-wing threat to the parliamentary system of government which had emerged around the turn of the decade. Although drawing its support in Parliament from a

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10. Ibid., p. 179.
11. Joll 1973, pp. 370—3; Duroselle 1979, pp. 351—5.

narrow centrist base, the Kivimäki-led minority coalition government, which took office in December 1932 following the fall of the Sunila cabinet, proved a durable one, sitting until October 1936. Occasional discussions took place between the Social Democrats and the Agrarians over much of the course of this period on the possibility of forming a majority government, but both sides were forced to conclude that the ideological differences and political interests dividing them were too great to allow a compromise at this stage. Against this background of a divided opposition, the Kivimäki administration was able to enjoy the tacit support of the majority, being seen as a means of avoiding alternative, less attractive potential coalitions.[12] On the Right, the policy stance adopted by the new leadership of the National Coalition Party, aimed at distancing the party from association with the People's Patriotic Movement, gained further support. While warning the IKL of the dangers of too slavishly following the example of right-wing movements abroad, the National Coalition's new party leader, J. K. Paasikivi, nevertheless did not also forget to warn both his own party and the country as a whole of the continuing dangers posed by Marxist ideology and political activity.[13] Despite its increasing isolation from the other political parties, the IKL continued to maintain an active political profile, and remained committed to its original political programme and aims.

Within student circles, the political position and influence of the nationalist Academic Karelian Society continued to grow. The departure in 1932 of a group of leading moderate members critical of the society's attitude to the Mäntsälä incident led to a power struggle within the student body at Helsinki University for control over the regional student unions, and saw AKS members assume control in many of them. This success allowed the organisation to secure a powerful role for itself in the leadership of the University Student Union and over the student paper *Ylioppilaslehti*.[14]

Many of the supporters of the more extreme brands of nationalist sentiment within the country continued to be found within the student community and organisations closely linked to it, such as

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12. H. Soikkanen 1975, pp. 558—9; Mylly 1983, pp. 52—6.
13. Paasikiven linja II, pp. 51—60, 77, 218.
14. Klinge IV 1968, pp. 155—8; Kuusisto II 1978, pp. 109—10; U. Peltoniemi 5.6.1980.

the Finnish Federation. The activity of these various nationalist organisations reached something of a peak between 1934 and 1936, during which period the AKS organised an extensive campaign directed against the compromise solution, proposed at the beginning of 1935 by the Kivimäki government, to resolve the dispute over the role of Swedish at Helsinki University. This campaign, directed by Vilho Helanen and Yrjö Vuorjoki, both leading figures within the AKS and the wider student community, while reflecting the strength of emotions on the language issue, also represented a calculated political gamble on the part of its organisers to extend the influence of the society, and nationalist opinion in general, beyond the university world to embrace a wider section of society. Despite some initial success, the campaign ultimately failed, however, largely as a result of the major changes which had taken place in the political climate since the beginning of the decade and which had served to increasingly isolate the AKS and its brand of expansionist nationalist ideals from the political mainstream.[15]

The limited liberalisation of the political climate which accompanied the country's recovery from the excesses of the early 1930s, together with the country's emergence from the effects of the depression by mid-decade, provided the Left with more room for political and social manoeuvre. The steady growth in the membership of the SAK trade union federation which took place from 1934 onwards owed much to this development and to the abandonment by the underground Communist Party of its earlier uncompromising hostility to the new organisation, which had been set up after the banning of the communist-controlled SAJ.[16] The trade union movement began to adopt many policy ideas current among trade unions in the Scandinavian countries, among them an emphasis on comprehensive pay agreements covering working conditions and terms of employment. Attempts by the SAK to put this idea into practice, however, met with determined resistance from individual employers and the Employers' Federation (STK), who were keen to stress the differences between the labour markets in Finland and the other Scandinavian

15. Hyvämäki 1937, p. 16; Partanen 1980, pp. 303—6.
16. Salomaa 1971, p. 178.

countries, and were reluctant to recognise the role of the SAK as a negotiating partner. The appointment of Antti Hackzell to replace Axel Palmgren as head of the STK in 1936 brought little real change in the employers' position. Hackzell's diplomatic manner could not obscure his adherence to the conservative, patriarchal approach which had been pursued by his predecessor, and his opposition to any moves towards introducing Scandinavian-style negotiating methods into pay bargaining.[17] Like Palmgren before him, Hackzell was unwilling to make any voluntary concessions likely to undermine the employers' hold on the upper hand in the labour market.

The gradual shift in the political climate also gave the radical Left, which had been forced to adopt a low profile for much of the early part of the decade, the opportunity for renewed activity. This was reflected in an upswing in left-wing interest in literature and the arts, and in the publication of various literary journals, including *Soihtu* and *Kirjallisuuslehti* and a new radical version of *Tulenkantajat,* which began to appear in 1933. The Left was also active at the time of the trial of the communist Toivo Antikainen for illegal communist activity and murder at the end of 1934, and in the founding of the short-lived Federation for Human Rights, set up to petition for the removal of the death sentence from the statute book. This attempt to rally left-wing support appealed to the general antagonism traditionally felt within the labour movement towards the judiciary, and also managed to attract supporters from the Social Democrats and from among liberal opinion.[18] This increasing, if modest role exercised by the radical Left and the underground Communist Party did not go unnoticed by some sections of conservative opinion, where it aroused concern that the Left, backed by Comintern, might be attempting to engineer an alliance with more moderate elements in society prior to attempting to install a popular front-type government, along the lines of similar political groupings elsewhere in Europe. Pressure against the Left by the authorities was, as a result, stepped up, as was police surveillance of leading left-wing figures and organisations.

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17. Mansner 1981, pp. 455, 458—60.
18. Upton 1970, p. 121; Tuomioja II 1982, pp. 215—6; Hyvönen 1971, pp. 259—68, 272.

The 1936 parliamentary elections saw the Social Democrats further consolidate their position in Parliament, increasing their number of seats from 78 to 83. While not bringing any immediate change of government, the result did serve to bring increased pressure for some modification to the composition of the coalition behind the Kivimäki administration, particularly in the direction of a Social Democrat-Agrarian government. President Svinhufvud's resistance to countenancing the inclusion of the Social Democrats in any coalition, even after the fall of the Kivimäki government in the autumn, however, effectively put a temporary halt to these plans. Another minority administration, including the Agrarians but with National Coalition and Progressive partners, under Kyösti Kallio, was formed.[19] The Social Democrats did not let Svinhufvud's opposition deflect them from their aim, however, and continued to work towards freeing the party from what the party's leader, Väinö Tanner, described as its 'second class citizen' status, and clearing the way towards the party taking what it saw as its fair share of government responsibility. To this end, the Social Democrats joined forces with the Agrarians at the beginning of the following year to secure the defeat of Svinhufvud's candidacy in the presidential election, thereby allowing Kallio to be elected in his stead. Soon after Kallio's taking up office, a new majority administration made up of Social Democrat and Agrarian ministers, with a token Progressive Party representation, was formed under the prime-ministership of the Progressive A. K. Cajander. This quickly became popularly known as the 'red earth' government, to symbolise its novel alliance of socialist and agrarian interests.[20]

The decision by the Agrarians and Progressives to enter into governmental alliance with the Social Democrats was looked upon by the Right as amounting to little short of a betrayal of the non-socialist cause and, by extension, a betrayal of the values fought for by the Whites in the Civil War. To an extent, the Right was correct, in that the formation of the 'red earth' government, by virtue of its composition, did mark a clear and historic attempt, after nearly twenty years of independence, to finally come to terms with the

19. E. W. Juva II 1961, pp. 521—2; H. Soikkanen 1975, ppl 585—7.
20. Mylly 1983, pp. 69—76; T. Soikkanen 1983, pp. 97—109, 116—23.

country's troubled recent past. More particularly, it marked a new willingness, one not seen before, on the part of the parties concerned to put their ideological differences to one side in order to strike a political bargain with some potential of bridging the very real political and social divisions affecting the country.[21] The Right found itself abruptly consigned to the role of parliamentary opposition, a major blow coming after a long period of political security, and only relatively shortly after it had nearly come close to introducing a form of government more in line with its own ideals. The formation of Cajander's majority coalition also came as a sharp blow to the Swedish People's Party, which lost the bargaining position it had become accustomed to under previous minority administrations and found itself instead isolated within the non-socialist opposition. The Swedish-speaking community was nevertheless able to gain some consolation from the appointment of a Swedish-speaking minister, the Social Democrat K. A. Fagerholm, to the Cajander cabinet in November 1937.

Secure in the knowledge of its large parliamentary majority, the new government was able to push through a number of pieces of difficult legislation, including a compromise solution to the language dispute affecting Helsinki University, various social reforms, and an expanded defence procurement programme. The coalition's commitment to working towards developing a new sense of national unity embracing the whole of the population, regardless of political affiliation or ideological sympathies, was well highlighted, if only symbolically, during the celebrations held on Independence Day, 1937 to mark twenty years of independence. This was particularly reflected in the range of speakers chosen to address the audience at the official celebrations held in Helsinki, and which included representatives from the Swedish-speaking minority and the trade union movement. Not unsurprisingly, this move away from traditional practice, which had up until then tended to make these sort of events very much the property of the conservative élite, met with much indirect adverse comment from the right-wing.[22] The continuing distrust and hostility felt within the Right towards the Social Democrats

21. Mylly 1983, pp. 78—80.
22. SS 5.12.1937; HS 6.12., 8.12.1937; US 8.12.1937; AS 8.12., 9.12., 10.12.1937.

was reflected in the way the celebrations held soon after in the spring of 1938, to mark the White Army's victory twenty years previously in 1918, were exploited in an effort to undermine support for Cajander's centre-left coalition and to drive a wedge between the Agrarians and the Social Democrats. For all the attention the celebrations, with Mannerheim at their head, received in the media, they nevertheless failed to achieve their undeclared aim of destabilising government unity. The success of the Cajander government in maintaining its internal cohesion and resisting the various attempts made to topple it proved, in fact, a source of continual surprise, not only to the coalition parties themselves, but also to the conservative opposition and the underground Communist Party.[23]

Much of the background to this success lay in the growth that took place during the latter years of the 1930s of a more widely-based sense of national unity. Among the factors central to this development was the gradual abandonment by the labour movement of its traditional hostility towards government, which had been born out of its experiences during the earlier years of independence when the Left had found itself consistently excluded from fully participating in the democratic process, and its adoption of a more active role in politics. Tanner's part in this, both in his capacity as one of the main architects of the Cajander coalition and leader of the Social Democrats, was particularly important. In line with his pragmatic brand of socialism, he had consistently worked towards steering the Social Democrats away from political isolation and towards some form of compromise with the Centre which would allow the party to finally take advantage of its parliamentary power.

The increasing sense of a growing, if still modest national consensus felt in post-1937 Finnish society was also reflected in the decline in influence wielded by the more extreme elements of the Finnish-language nationalist movement in the continuing debate surrounding the language question. Organisations such as the AKS, although initially successful in mobilising opinion behind their campaign for the complete fennicisation of Helsinki University, ultimately proved unable to retain the support they

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23. Mylly 1983, pp. 225—30; Aili Mäkinen 20.1.1971.

had built up within society and the political parties, particularly the Agrarian Party. Symptomatic of this decline was the poor showing of the AKS-sponsored petition on the issue. While Swedish-speaking activists had been able to collect a petition including some 154,000 names in 1934 in defence of the maintenance of Swedish-language instruction, their Finnish-speaking opponents were only able to collect some 267,000 names by the summer of 1937 for their counter-petition calling for a more radical solution to the problem than that contained in the government's compromise legislation on the issue. This was a relatively small figure in relation to the size of the Finnish-speaking population, and fell well below what had been hoped for.[24]

The position of the Swedish People's Party following the change of government in the spring of 1937 was particularly precarious. Disagreements over possible ways of clawing back a measure of political leverage led to some bitter argument at the party congress held in Vaasa soon after the Cajander government took office.[25] Similar concerns lay behind the proposal broached by the party in the autumn of 1938 for convening a national Finland-Swedish conference, embracing representatives from the Swedish People's Party itself, the left-wing Svenska Vänstern party, and Swedish-speaking Social Democrats. Modelled on the meeting called during the troubles of 1919, it was argued that such a conference would help consolidate and strengthen the Swedish-speaking community's potential for presenting a united face to unwelcome developments emanating from the Finnish-speaking majority.[26] At a time when other more important issues than those related to Finland-Swedish concerns were increasingly coming to dominate political life, however, little real progress was made with these plans for a united policy strategy embracing all sections of the Swedish-speaking community.

For all the increased sense of national unity which developed during the latter half of the 1930s, a number of deep-going

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24. Hämäläinen 1968, pp. 217, 260; Alapuro 1973; p. 151; Klinge IV 1968, pp. 180, 188; Hbl 26.10.1934; SS 19.6.1973; *Suomen Heimo* 10.4.1937, 15.12.1938.
25. AU 19.5.1937; Ragnar Furuhjelm: Dagbok 15.5.1937 (AA); V. V. Nordström 8.5.1979.
26. Protokoll vid gemensamt möte med Svenska Folkpartiets centralstyrelse och svenska riksdagsgruppen 27.10.1938 (SvCA); Furuhjelm: Dagbok 20.10.1938, 14.2.1939.

divisions affecting political and social attitudes remained, both at the conscious and unconscious levels. The gulf between the Finnish and Swedish-speaking communities remained a very real one for a large number of the population and continued to act as a powerful divisive factor. Support among Swedish-speakers for the old Freudenthal view that had looked upon their community as belonging, with the mainland Swedish population, to one ethnic entity had nevertheless largely fallen away by this stage and been replaced by one stressing the independent nature and identity of Swedish-language culture and settlement in Finland. A certain sense of superiority over the Finnish-speaking majority born out of cultural and historical factors, however, continued to persist in what might be described as the Swedish-speaking community's collective unconscious, as well as in everyday attitudes.

On the other side of the linguistic fence, within the Finnish nationalist movement, ethnic-based arguments continued to loom large. A highly idealised view of the underlying ethnic, linguistic, physical and intellectual constituents of what was identified as the Finnish national identity enjoyed wide support. Marked hostility to the Swedish-speaking minority, reinforced by constant allusions to the latter's supposed lack of patriotism, remained not uncommon among the more extreme elements of the movement. There were also a number within the movement who felt some interest and sympathy with ideas developed by Nazi thinkers, including the National Socialists' emphasis on Aryan values and German ethnic superiority. Ironically, Nazi racial theories, had they ever been implemented to their full extent, would have had little time or respect for a separate Finnish ethnic identity.

While continuing to have an influence on Finnish society far out of proportion to the number of seats held by conservative members in Parliament, conservative opinion no longer enjoyed the same hold it had had during the first years of independence by the late 1930s. Pluralist, egalitarian political ideas, stressing the value of compromise, continued to remain essentially alien to the traditional hard core of conservative opinion, which remained dominated by inflexible and largely anachronistic notions of government and national interest owing more to the nineteenth than the twentieth century. Typical of the attitudes current among the conservative élite was its members' continued adherence to a distorted belief in the inherent superiority of their political,

cultural and social values over those held by their opponents. At its most extreme, this was reflected in the attitudes of those conservatives who made little or no attempt to come to terms with the reality of the labour movement and, as a result, failed to detect any differences of emphasis, opinion or philosophy within it, preferring instead to dismiss out of hand anything which they saw as even slightly smacking of socialism. Such a blind refusal to face facts, however, was not widely evident within more moderate conservative opinion. The growing strength of the latter was evident in the gradual shift which took place in attitudes towards the Civil War, away from outright condemnation of the defeated Reds. The blame for the uprising came instead to be put on their misguided leaders, rather than the rank and file.

A parallel softening of attitudes also took place on the Left, with more attempt being given to seeing the bourgeoisie as a heterogeneous social grouping with varying allegiances, rather than a single amorphous mass, distinguished only in degree of reactionary opinion. From a wider social perspective, however, the machinery of government, together with higher education and business, continued to remain distant and alien to the labour movement, and seemingly impregnable to the latter's attempts to influence their workings. The experience of the Civil War and the troubled years of the early 1930s, marked by the rise of the Lapua movement and economic recession, continued to play a major part in shaping working class political attitudes and view of the world. The Civil War, together with its bloody aftermath, in particular, retained a powerful hold on the socialist imagination. Regardless of the various individual interpretations put on the Red defeat, the shadow the latter had cast over the labour movement and left-wing politics, and continued to cast, was something that could not be ignored by anyone active on the Left. As the economy recovered from the worst effects of the recession and as political developments began to move, however slowly, towards a more open society, and with the acceptance of the Social Democrats into government in 1937, however, the general mood within the Left during the latter years of the decade was decidedly more optimistic than perhaps it had been at any time since independence.

3. Domestic attitudes to international developments

The overall level of interest in events and developments abroad had, by the latter half of the 1930s, grown significantly in comparison to that evident during the early years of independence, a fact reflected in the expanded news coverage and comment on foreign issues appearing in the press of the time. This rise in interest owed part of its origin to the increasing international tension affecting various countries in Europe, and part to the general evolution of Finnish society which had taken place over the intervening years. For all the broadening of horizons this embraced, however, this generally positive development was countered by the continuing tendency among commentators and political groupings on both the Right and the Left to favour simplistic interpretations of events which, instead of fostering a critical appreciation of international trends, tended to reinforce what often amounted to a very black and white view of the world within their readers and supporters. This type of approach was nevertheless tempered to a degree, although admittedly to quite a restricted degree with regard to the press, by a widening realisation of the security policy problems facing the country and the increasing need for developing realistic policy ideas capable of coming to grips with them.

Characteristic of this change in attitudes towards the international situation was the largely cool reception given to attempts to revive a more active border states policy. Following the failure of the Warsaw agreement to be ratified in 1922, relations between the various border states had been mainly limited to purely commercial and cultural issues. A body of opinion advocating some form of regional alliance had nevertheless remained active all the same, even among some elements of moderate opinion and the press, although its influence had steadily fallen off. The proposal by the Soviet Union of a Locarno-type security system for Eastern Europe put forward in 1934, however, finally convinced the majority of those still sympathetic to the idea, *Helsingin Sanomat* amongst them, to abandon what hopes they had left.[27]

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27. T. Soikkanen 1983, pp. 34—5.

Subsequent support for a border states-weighted foreign policy, in preference to the Scandinavian-oriented one favoured by the country's political leadership, came to be restricted to extreme nationalist elements and student activists grouped around such organisations as the AKS.[28]

A similar fate befell the interest in and links with Estonia and Hungary, inspired by the sense of shared ethnic and cultural inheritance linking the three countries, typical of the early years of independence. By the mid-1930s, these had lost much of their early strength and attraction, and overall visibility in society. Within the influential student community, they nevertheless continued to have a powerful role, but even here change was in the air. The cooling of relations with Estonia was only accelerated by the abrogation of Parliament and the banning of political parties by the Estonian Prime Minister, Konstantin Päts, with the backing of the army under General Laidoner, in 1934, and the former's assumption of the role of acting President ruling by decree. Päts' move was roundly criticised by a number of figures within the AKS, who did little to hide their disappointment at the failure of the attempt by the Estonian League of Liberation War Veterans (Vabadussõjalaste Liit) to dislodge Päts from power in December of the following year.[29] Despite these developments, the AKS leadership nevertheless attempted to maintain some measure of contact between the two countries' student communities. Vilho Helanen, leader of the AKS between 1934 and 1935 and later, continued to be particularly prominent in calling for contacts with Estonia to be maintained.[30] Links with the other Baltic countries continued to be maintained by the joint student organisation SELL, but although formally remaining intact and with regular congresses being held right up until the outbreak of the Second World War, their actual significance fell off sharply from around 1933 onwards.[31]

Germany continued to figure strongly in thinking on the extreme Right and also more generally within a substantial section of more

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28. *Ylioppilaslehti* 25.11.1933, 26.10.1935.
29. Klinge IV 1968, pp. 191—3; Veikko Loppi 5.10.1979.
30. Klinge IV 1968, pp. 193—4; Kuusisto II 1978, pp. 72—3.
31. H. Paslmann: SELL:n ylioppilasliitto kymmenvuotias, p. 4 (SELL collection/VA). *Ylioppilaslehti* 13.5.1939; Antero Manninen 15.9.1980.

moderate conservative opinion, most particularly by virtue of the important role she was seen as playing in the Western world's common struggle against communist expansion. Little was known about the detailed ideas contained in the National Socialist political programme, beyond the Nazis' general opposition to the labour movement and liberalism, neither close to Finnish conservatives' hearts. *Ajan Suunta,* and to a lesser extent *Uusi Suomi,* both appear to have been satisfied with the general trend of political and ideological developments in Central Europe, seeing in them much of benefit to Finland. No similar optimism, however, was to be found regarding these developments outside the Right, least of all within the socialist press. *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* and *Helsingin Sanomat* were consistently and sharply critical, at least during the early years following Hitler's rise to power, of the pattern of developments in Germany, and in their condemnation of totalitarianism.[32] Comment in the latter of these two papers, however, began to become more cautious and less absolute as time went on. No such shift was evident in the opinions of those writing for *Turun Sanomat,* who continued to openly criticise developments in Germany and the policies of the Nazi party. Nevertheless, little room for comment was found in any of the Finnish papers on some of the more controversial aspects of the Nazis' political programme, such as their increasingly violent anti-semitism. Apart from *Ajan Suunta,* which expressed some guarded sympathy with German policy in this area, and *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti,* which condemned it out of hand, no significant comment on the Jewish question proved forthcoming from among the other major papers, with many of them quietly ignoring the problem altogether.[33]

Overall criticism of Hitler and conditions in Germany generally fell off and the tone of comment on German affairs became more guarded as time went on, particularly after Hitler became head of state following Hindenburg's formal step-down from office and as Germany's increasing political power in Europe began to be better appreciated. It was only from around 1935 and 1936 onwards, however, that Germany's growing military capability also became

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32. SS 31.1., 24.3., 3.5., 9.11.1933; HS 30.3., 10.5., 19.5.1933.
33. Kujala 1970, pp. 146—9.

clear to Finnish commentators. The introduction of general conscription in Germany in the spring of 1935 and the occupation of the Rhineland a year later were the subject of wide coverage and comment in the Finnish press. *Ajan Suunta* and *Uusi Suomi,* for instance, both looked favourably on these moves strengthening the German position as serving to eliminate some of the injustices imposed on Germany by the Versailles Peace and as contributing to a better balance in the international situation. *Hufvudstadsbladet,* speaking for the Swedish-speaking community, was much less enthusiastic about these developments, adopting a cautious line of comment on them, in line with its generally low-key approach to all contentious issues. *Sosialidemokraatti,* despite its history of criticism of the Versailles agreement as unbalanced and serving purely Allied interests, reacted critically to the German moves.[34]

Alongside the problem of increasingly strained relations between Germany and the Western powers, the overall rise in international tension characteristic of the period also focused Finnish attention on Soviet-German relations. From the time of the First World War and the years surrounding independence onwards, Soviet and German interests had generally come to be seen as inherently irreconcilable. Far from being a cause for concern for Finland, however, this friction between Germany and the Soviet Union, and which gave every sign of worsening as German confidence grew, tended to be seen by the conservative establishment as of long-term benefit to Finnish security. A powerful Germany, having regained her status as a major political and military factor in Europe, would, it was thought, be able to act as a counterbalance to any attempt by the Soviet Union to extend its influence, both generally and more specifically in the Baltic region. This tendency to emphasise Germany's role in security questions persisted on the Right, despite the shift which took place in the wider political arena towards looking to a closer association with Scandinavia as a means of securing Finnish defence interests. This was especially evident in the split over the latter policy which developed within the National Coalition Party, which saw a number of party figures arguing for the rejection of any

34. Ibid., pp. 85—91, 101—11.

Scandinavian association in favour of developing closer ties with Germany. Germany's potential to act as a counterbalance to the Soviet Union was also recognised within liberal and socialist opinion. Rather than the opposition of German and Soviet interests necessarily working to Finland's advantage, however, liberal and socialist politicians tended to see increasing friction between the two powers as only likely to undermine Finland's position, and argued in consequence for maintaining a healthy distance from both countries.[35]

Attitudes towards Germany within the AKS and the People's Patriotic Movement differed widely from those typical in the Centre. The strength of this pro-German sentiment was well revealed in the public pronouncements of leading figures in these organisations, such as R. G. Kallia. Kallia's view of Europe was simple and at the same time wonderfully uncompromising. Europe was, he argued, effectively divided into two camps, those powers truly committed to defending their national and political identities, which he saw as Germany and Italy, and those which either wittingly or unwittingly aided the communist cause, among which he included France and the small states of Europe. The formation of Cajander's 'red earth' government in the spring of 1937 was greeted by Kallia as a particularly ill omen and as pointing the way to a future which would see Finland irrevocably throwing in her lot with the weaker group of European nations lacking a strong sense of national purpose.[36] Only by allying herself with a militarily strong Germany, able and willing to extend her influence eastward, Kallia argued, could Finland have any real chance of achieving that ideal, cherished by all those on the far Right, of a Greater Finland embracing all that territory to the east of her 1920 borders considered as by rights belonging to Finland.

The strong ideological hostility towards the Soviet Union typical of the extreme Right and which encouraged the idea of a closer association with Germany was paralleled by a similar, if less pronounced, hostility towards Sweden and the rest of Scandinavia. For a number of pro-German right-wing thinkers such as Esa

35. Paasivirta 1968, p. 92.
36. *Suomen Heimo* 22.3.1937.

Kaitila, Scandinavia came to be seen as a region of internally weak and dangerously pacifist countries incapable of resisting Communism. Kaitila ultimately came to argue that Scandinavia constituted as much of a danger in ideological terms to Finland as the Soviet Union, and that the growing keenness of the government to develop ties with Scandinavia, together with the spectre of the 'Scandinavian mentality' spreading to Finland this would bring, could only be disadvantageous to Finland's long-term interests.[37] Within the AKS as a whole, however, many of the more uncompromising and expansionist aspects of nationalist philosophy, particularly with regard to East Karelia, began to attract less support as the decade wore on, serving to distance the society from the more radical IKL, which it openly supported for the last time during the parliamentary elections of 1936. Attention increasingly came to be turned instead to the matter of Finland's fraught international position and to ways of improving national security and the country's defence capabilities. This re-evaluation of attitudes within the AKS was also reflected in the controversial views, in terms of previous AKS thinking, put forward by such leading lights as Matti Kuusi, who argued for abandoning the hostilities born out of the Civil War, in the interests of developing a new sense of common national purpose.[38]

Greatest support for government efforts to develop a closer association with Scandinavia came predictably from the country's Swedish-speaking community. Representatives of the latter consistently underlined the importance of the role played by a common Scandinavian cultural and historical inheritance in providing a sense of linkage between countries in the region and an effective base on which to build closer inter-state relations. In promoting these links, however, Swedish-speaking politicians found themselves hampered by the rise of the Social Democrats within Finland and by the powerful position of the Left in Sweden, which effectively deprived them of their previous privileged relationship with Sweden's decision-makers.

No such difficulties faced the Social Democrats, in contrast, who felt increasingly attracted to Scandinavia by virtue of their

37. *Suomen Heimo* 15.3.1936.
38. *Ylioppilaslehti* 9.4.1937; Kuusi 1938, pp. 22—39.

ideological affinities with the powerful Scandinavian socialist parties. Following the inclusion of the Norwegian Labour Party in government, these enjoyed governmental responsibility in all three of the Scandinavian states by 1935. The notion of a common Scandinavian brand of democracy came to be strongly emphasised by the Finnish party, and from the mid-1930s onwards annual pan-Scandinavian socialist congresses, devoted to discussion of common political themes, were organised by the various Nordic social democrat parties on an alternating basis in each of the Scandinavian countries.[39] The Social Democrats' enthusiasm for building up ties with Scandinavia was also influenced, in addition to these more general factors, by a more specific concern with national security issues. Closer cooperation between the Nordic countries, aimed at developing some form of regional security arrangement, was increasingly seen by party leaders as an effective way of reducing Finland's dependence on the major European powers and power blocs. Much of the inspiration for this approach came from the ideas lying behind the League of Nations. This increased awareness of security issues was also accompanied by a new acceptance of the need for increased defence spending. The shift in opinion within the Swedish Social Democrats during the 1930s towards support for an increase in the size and strength of Swedish defence forces, and reflected in the 1936 defence budget, also undoubtedly had an influence on Finnish socialist thinking.[40]

Closer links between the Scandinavian social democrat and labour parties and trade union movements were also fostered through the activities of the joint Scandinavian cooperative committee founded earlier. Participation in the latter helped to keep the Finnish party better informed of developments in the other Scandinavian countries, as well as providing it with better access to information on wider international issues and to Scandinavian discussion on these questions. The usefulness of this largely ad hoc arrangement can be gauged from the fact that it often proved capable of providing the party with information on Scandinavian issues more rapidly than that received by the

39. SS 26.6., 27.6.1938.
40. SS 2.10., 17.11.1933, 5.12.1935.

government through official diplomatic channels.

These links naturally served to increase the party's overall standing and political influence within the country. The new status enjoyed by the Social Democrats was symbolically highlighted at the time of the visit made by the prime ministers of Sweden, Norway and Denmark to Helsinki at the end of 1935, at the joint invitation of the government and the Finnish party.[41] The increasingly prominent role in Finnish politics assumed by the Social Democrats did not meet with universal satisfaction, and the prospect of the Social Democrats being included in government in Finland, in line with developments in the other Scandinavian countries, provoked some sharp comment from the Right. The veteran National Coalition politician K. N. Rantakari reflected a general view on the Right when he expressed his hope, in the autumn of 1935, that closer inter-governmental links with the Nordic countries would not also see Finland following the Scandinavian example in terms of domestic policy.[42]

European developments during the mid-1930s gave the Progressives much cause for pessimism. The growing spread of fascism in the wake of Hitler's rise to power was seen by liberal opinion as posing a grave threat to the continued existence of democratic parliamentary values and institutions throughout the Continent. The liberal ideal of a peaceful Europe capable of settling its disputes without recourse to military might appeared to be crumbling as the new political forces at work within Europe increasingly cut the ground away from the ideas underpinning the League of Nations. Liberal disquiet was particularly evident concerning the long-term intentions of the major Baltic powers, Germany and the Soviet Union, and their possible plans with regard to Finland. Closer cooperation between the smaller countries of Europe, as a means of countering the threat to collective security posed by what were seen as the machinations of the great powers, had always been close to the hearts of many liberals, and was now reflected in growing liberal support for closer ties with Scandinavia.[43]

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41. SS 8.12.1935.
42. See K. N. Rantakari's letter to Wäinö Wuolijoki, reproduced in Tanner 1966, pp. 174—5.
43. *Vapaa Kansa* covered events in Britain widely between 1936—38, but from the end of 1938 onwards turned its attention increasingly to Sweden.

Scandinavia had also begun to play a growing part in Agrarian Party thinking, following the collapse of the party's earlier vision of closer ties with the agrarian movements of East and Central Europe as a result of the general shift towards the Right which had affected the region and led in a number of cases to the establishment of dictatorial governments with no agrarian representation. The earlier latent hostility, towards Sweden in particular, which had tended to characterise Agrarian attitudes towards Finland's western neighbours had gradually faded. The role taken by the Swedish Bondeförbundet in the formation of a new government coalition in 1936 only served to reinforce calls within the Finnish party for a closer working relationship between Sweden and Finland. Contact between the two parties, which had previously had little if anything to do with each other, was soon established and quickly developed.[44]

Attitudes within the National Coalition Party towards developments abroad, and particularly with regard to Germany and Sweden, continued to be divided. Germany's re-emergence as a major power and her gradual reassertion of her international influence had initially been seen as serving to introduce a better balance of power into the Baltic area and as justified in righting the injustices imposed by the Versailles Peace. Germany's increasingly aggressive stance towards her neighbours and other countries, however, made a number of conservatives begin to doubt the positive benefits of the rise in German strength and to fear its potential negative effect on Finnish security. This anxiety over Germany's possible future moves, coupled with a growing realisation that Finland was not alone among the smaller countries of northern Europe in becoming increasingly exposed and isolated, helped to encourage support within the party for sounding out the possibilities of a closer association with Finland's Scandinavian neighbours, despite the continued strength of pro-German sentiment within the party. The growing political and military interest in fortifying the Åland Islands as a means of increasing Finland's security also served to reinforce interest in developing ties with Sweden. At no point, however, was there any enthusiasm for extending possible closer bilateral cooperation to involve

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44. Mylly 1983, p. 193.

Swedish participation in a fortification programme, or to make Sweden responsible for the area's defence in the event of an international crisis.

Increasing opposition began to make itself heard within the conservative camp towards Germany's new political philosophy. The violent demise of Ernst Röhm and his immediate SA associates in 1934 had a particularly negative impact on conservative opinion.[45] As National Socialism's intolerance towards any form of real political opposition began to be more widely appreciated on the Right, and as post-1933 Germany generally came to be seen in a more critical light by various elements of conservative opinion, so attitudes towards Scandinavia improved. Pro-Scandinavian views never, however, attained truly wide currency on the Right, as a result of the hostility towards the general pattern of social and political developments in the Scandinavian countries typically felt among many conservative observers, despite their often tacit respect for Scandinavian democratic ideals. Indicative of the general moderation in views towards the Left which took place on the Right was the abandonment after 1934 of attempts by the National Coalition aimed at modifying the constitution to curb the power of Parliament. Widespread suspicion of Social Democrat intentions and of the wisdom of allowing the Social Democrats full reign to exploit their parliamentary power nevertheless remained.

Overall attitudes towards Britain in the latter half of the 1930s were relatively favourable, although cool, maintained in part by Britain's continuing role as an important export market for Finnish industry. Britain's unwillingness to encumber herself with European alliance relationships was widely respected, particularly around mid-decade. This generally positive attitude, however, gave way to a more critical, if not directly hostile one, in the wake of the signing of the Munich agreement in the autumn of 1938. Much of this new anti-British sentiment, which was most marked in those circles otherwise most critical of Hitler and the Nazi movement, focused on the person of Chamberlain who, in acceding to German pressure over the Sudeten question, was seen

45. Vares 1983, pp. 15—16.

as having betrayed the principles enshrined in the League of Nations.

In contrast to the general, if low-key warmth felt towards Britain prior to Munich, opinion across the political spectrum had been critical of France for some time. The Franco-Soviet military treaty signed in 1935 was seen as effectively marking the end of active French interest in the security problems, both of Finland and of the other small Baltic states. Right-wing criticism of French policy even went so far in some cases as to suggest that, as a result of the agreement, France had committed herself, if only indirectly, to supporting Soviet expansionism. The victory of the popular front coalition in the French elections in 1936 and the formation of a new government under Léon Blum only served to deepen the Right's growing criticism of developments in France, as well as awaken fears within more moderate circles. France came increasingly to be seen as a country in decline, dominated by internal crises and incapable of maintaining her great power status. Anti-French feeling was naturally all the stronger and more prominent among pro-German opinion. The growing dissatisfaction with the Western powers typical on the Right gained added impetus following the formers' unwillingness to assist the Nationalist forces in the Spanish Civil War, a conflict which reawakened memories of Finland's own civil war. Much of the moderate press nevertheless aligned itself behind the cautious wait and see stance adopted by the Cajander government, which avoided giving open support to either side in the struggle.

On the question of Finland's relations with the Soviet Union, opinion in the latter half of the 1930s came to be increasingly dominated by a sense of uncertainty about the Soviet Union's ultimate attitudes towards Finland, both in international and ideological terms. While suspicion of Soviet aims and intentions had been deep-rooted within non-socialist opinion from the very first years of independence onwards, attitudes within the socialist camp had tended to be more divided and generally more positive. The Social Democrats, despite the very real ideological differences between their ideas and those espoused by orthodox Communism, and the argument and hostility between the two groupings these differences generated, had retained a certain loyalty towards the Bolsheviks, who they believed capable of finally freeing Russia

from her nineteenth-century reactionary inheritance. They had also been optimistic that, in the course of time, the Soviet political system would gradually come closer to the Western model. No such hopes had been entertained within the radical Left and least of all within the ranks of the underground Communist Party, among whom the Soviet Union and the Soviet experiment had continued to be looked on as providing a source of inspiration for development elsewhere.

The spread of a more critical attitude within the Left, together with the growing convergence of socialist and non-socialist views towards Soviet developments it saw towards the end of the 1930s, was influenced by a number of factors, among them the Soviet Union's growing military might. As the Soviet Union's role as a major power and one as capable of defending and advancing its own national interests as any other, for all its identification with communist ideology and hostility towards the capitalist world, began to be more widely appreciated, so it began to be seen as potentially posing a parallel challenge to Finnish foreign policy and the Finnish position to that posed by its capitalist enemies. The political trials prominent between 1936 and 1938 also received considerable attention and served to further tarnish the Soviet image in Finland in the eyes of the Left; the Soviet Union increasingly came to be seen as a country in the grip of political terror and under the control of a dictatorial leader determined to impose his will, whatever the social or political cost. In contrast to the attention given to the trials, relatively little was devoted to Soviet economic developments. The extensive growth of heavy industry which took place, particularly under the second five-year plan, together with Soviet agriculture's gradual emergence from the worst of its earlier crises, received little comment in the majority of the press, with the exception perhaps of *Hufvudstadsbladet,* which regularly carried well-informed commentaries on the Soviet economy.[46]

Attitudes on the Left, within the Social Democrats as well as the more radical elements of the labour movement, were particularly shaken by the executions of many prominent old Bolshevik figures identified with the founding days of the communist state which

46. Hbl 19.5.1937.

took place as a consequence of the political trials and accompanying purges of the party hierarchy.[47] The harshness of Stalin's methods, together with his apparent disregard for any form of compromise approach to problems, bred the suspicion that a Soviet Union capable of sanctioning such radical internal upheaval could not be relied on not to resort at some time in the future to similar heavy-handed policies on the international stage. This found expression in the much greater degree of caution and suspicion towards the Soviet Union and Soviet intentions which began to characterise the labour movement's thinking on security policy questions.

The trials and executions in the Soviet Union also had a negative impact on the radical Left's overall political credibility, the movement having only shortly previously organised a campaign calling for the abandonment of the death sentence within Finland. This fall-off in public credibility probably had little influence on the underground Communist Party, however, beyond serving to hamper its potential for influencing people outside the party. Attitudes on the Left as a whole, even within the radical Left, towards the Soviet Union were also beginning to show signs of a growing wider disenchantment. This trend was only reinforced with the return of numbers of those who had clandestinely crossed the border in the early years of the decade to seek a new life in the Soviet Union, and the spread of reports about the difficulties encountered by those who had stayed on.[48] Further grist to the critics' mill was provided by the change in political fortunes experienced by a number of leading Finnish political emigrés in the Soviet Union, and in Karelia in particular, in the 1930s, and the chequered history of the Karelian Commune. Edvard Gylling's removal from office in 1935 came as a particularly heavy blow to many on the radical Left, for whom the Karelian Commune experiment had assumed a special significance from its inception. News of the imprisonment of Kullervo Manner, Kustaa Rovio and others, which appeared in the Finnish press from the late summer of 1936 onwards, and the harsh sentences meted out to them, only served to deepen the general sense of disillusionment that was felt,

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47. SS 21.8.1936, 14.6.1937.
48. See for ex. the ten-part article entitled 'Viisi ja puoli vuotta Neuvostoliitossa' which appeared in SS between 10.6. — 21.6.1938.

and led *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* to describe events in Karelia as amounting to a 'campaign of persecution' directed against the local Finnish communist leadership.[49]

4. Foreign policy questions

Clear signs of a definite move towards adoption of a foreign policy strategy based on a commitment to neutrality and a closer association with Scandinavia became evident around mid-decade. A desire to avoid involving Finland in the security guarantee agreements for the Baltic region proposed by the Soviet Union was instrumental in directing the attention of foreign policy decision-makers towards Scandinavia. The possibility of developing an effective security arrangement with the Baltic countries could no longer be considered a feasible option, while the decline in the strength of the League of Nations as a force in international politics had seen the undermining of much of the international system on which Finnish foreign policy, particularly during the latter half of the 1920s, had been constructed. There seems little doubt that Finnish confidence in the League and its potential to affect the pattern of international developments had dissolved well before it was officially admitted in public.

The government's shift towards aligning itself behind neutrality was made plain in a statement declaring Finland's solidarity with the Scandinavian neutrals presented to Parliament in December 1935, which succeeded in winning support from all political groupings, even the right-wing IKL. Uppermost in government thinking, however, was the desire to prevent Finland's being tied into a great power-sponsored Baltic security arrangement, rather than any real enthusiasm for closer Scandinavian links as such. This sense of consensus was nevertheless soon overshadowed by the significant shift in the European military balance which took place during the spring of 1936 with the rise of German influence following the occupation of the Rhineland, and which saw Germany again rise to the forefront of thinking within the People's

49. Hodgson 1967, pp. 167—9; Upton 1970, pp. 133—6; Ylärakkola 1976, pp. 281—94; SS 7.11.1935, 27.8., 13.10.1936.

Patriotic Movement and other sections of right-wing opinion. The overall direction and content of the government's new foreign policy initiative remained, in any case, essentially imprecise and ill-defined. Interviewed on his return from a visit to Poland and Estonia in May 1936, Foreign Minister Hackzell indicated the government's continued interest in maintaining links with the Baltic countries, in addition to developing ties with the Nordic area, reflecting the general desire existing within government circles to maintain a balanced foreign policy profile, rather than an explicitly Scandinavian one.[50]

Hackzell was replaced as Foreign Minister by the veteran Rudolf Holsti in the short-lived Kallio government which took office in the autumn of the same year. Holsti still retained many of the sympathies which had been evident during his previous term of office as Foreign Minister between 1919 and 1922; prominent among these was an interest in close relations with the border states and, above all, a desire to maintain good relations with the Western powers and Britain in particular. Holsti, who continued as Foreign Minister in the subsequent Cajander administration and was thus responsible for shaping foreign policy thinking as it developed, quickly had to forgo his personal interest in the border states, however, and come to terms with the demand for closer links with Scandinavia. He nevertheless remained unconvinced that the latter policy represented a completely satisfactory solution to Finland's foreign policy problems, preferring instead his own idea of a two-pronged orientation embracing the Nordic countries and the Western powers, working in close cooperation with the League of Nations, which he continued to see as a valuable force in international politics.[51]

The case for closer Scandinavian cooperation in the foreign policy field was particularly highlighted throughout the Nordic area by developments surrounding the League of Nations following the departure of Germany and Italy. The League's impotence over Mussolini's attack on Abyssinia in 1935 and failure to impose sanctions against Italy served to substantially increase Scandinavian doubts about the overall credibility of any foreign

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50. HS 27.5., 28.5.1936.
51. Ragnar Numelin 22.11.1962. See the report of the British envoy in Helsinki dated 28.11.1936 to the Foreign Office (FO 371/20331). Also SvD 22.1.1937.

policy based on the type of collective security offered by the League. As reliance on the League came to be seen as more likely to undermine than underpin the security of the organisation's small member states, such as those in Scandinavia, so attention turned towards the possible benefits to be gained from developing a Nordic-based strategy.[52]

As part of this new determination to emphasise Finland's ties with Scandinavia, various efforts were made by the government to reduce the friction existing between the country's two linguistic communities, which had previously played such a part in hampering relations with Sweden in particular. The very visible profile of nationalist opinion within Finland, together with the persistence of Sweden's traditional sympathies with the Swedish-speaking minority, had served to maintain suspicion towards Finland and Finnish intentions in a number of circles in Sweden and prevented the evolution of a wider perspective on Finnish affairs. An important, if low-key role in Finnish efforts to dispel Swedish concern over the language issue and emphasise the importance the Finnish government attached to cooling tempers in the language dispute, was played by Finland's new envoy in Stockholm, J. K. Paasikivi.[53]

Finland's relations with the Soviet Union were also the subject of some interest and concern in Sweden, as well as the rest of Scandinavia. Before committing themselves to any closer linkage, Scandinavian policy-makers wanted to be sure that Finland's relations with her eastern neighbour were on a sound footing and would not be likely to provide any unwelcome surprises for the rest of the Nordic community in the future.

Holsti's visit to Moscow in February 1937, the first by a Finnish foreign minister, marked a new attempt to improve the still rather strained relations existing between Finland and the Soviet Union, and calm Soviet fears with regard to Finland's interest in Scandinavian neutrality and the strength of pro-German opinion in Finnish society. Holsti's visit was seen at the time as marking the beginning of something of a thaw in relations between the two countries, and generated a degree of optimism in both Moscow and

52. Paasivirta 1968, pp. 95—6.
53. See Paasikivi's communication of 20.9.1937 to A. K. Cajander (Hugo Suolahti collection).

Helsinki. Whilst little in terms of concrete results was forthcoming from the talks, Holsti was nevertheless able to allay some of the Soviet government's concerns over what had come to be seen in Moscow as Finland's over-close relationship with Germany.[54] The replacement of the pro-German Svinhufvud by Kyösti Kallio as President, together with the formation of the new Cajander-led centre-left coalition, both taking place at around the same time, also contributed to improving Soviet confidence in Finland.

Holsti's visit met with some hostility on the Finnish Right, marked by angry arguments between the government and the opposition on the Foreign Minister's return from Moscow. While welcoming, in principle, the government's moves aimed at improving the state of Soviet-Finnish relations, many conservatives feared that such a policy could have a damaging effect on the country's relations with Germany.[55] The increasing tension affecting Soviet-German relations did indeed make itself felt in both Soviet and German attitudes towards Finland. Following the apparent upturn in Soviet-Finnish relations in the wake of Holsti's visit, Germany soon moved to try and prevent any further improvement displacing her own interests in the region. The visit to Finland by a German naval squadron during the summer of 1937, together with various other signs indicative of an increase in German military interest in Finland, including the strengthening of the German military mission in Helsinki, effectively served to put a halt to what modest improvement had begun to be seen in Finnish-Soviet relations, and reawaken Soviet fears of Finland's again moving closer to Germany.[56]

In advocating the case for increased cooperation with the Scandinavian countries, supporters of this policy made wide use of arguments stressing the common fate shared by the Nordic countries and the commonality of interests binding them together. At base, however, these arguments were essentially rather nebulous, appealing more to the emotions than to any clear argumentation of the advantages of such a policy.[57] That all four

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54. Suomi 1973, pp. 61—3; Mylly 1983, pp. 110—2; T. Soikkanen 1983, pp. 171, 180—1.
55. Mylly 1983, p.112; T. Soikkanen 1983, pp. 172, 176.
56. Information provided by Martti Julkunen.
57. Jakobson 1955, p. 64.

countries nevertheless did possess a number of shared interests and political traditions cannot be denied. In order to reinforce popular awareness of this fact and make the concept of Scandinavian neutrality a more credible one, greater emphasis came to be placed on the need to improve the region's defence capability. Wider contacts beyond those restricted to the arts and individual political parties, which had tended to dominate previously, began to be established and expanded between Finland and the Scandinavian countries. A greater freedom and confidence in the exchange of opinion on political issues between the four countries also began to be evident. Closer links, both formal and informal, began to be forged between the foreign ministers of the various Scandinavian countries.

Also indicative of this overall improvement in relations was the increase which took place in the level of contacts between the Finnish and Swedish armed forces, which had been at a relatively low ebb for most of the 1920s. This was prompted by a general desire to share views on the implications of the increased level of international tension, and by a more specific desire to clarify bilateral relations in the military field and explore the possibilities for further developing them. Particularly significant from the Finnish point of view were the group of agreements reached at the end of 1936 with the Swedish Bofors company, allowing the manufacture under licence in Finland of a number of Swedish-designed and developed weapons.[58] This, together with the establishment of improved channels of communication between the two high commands, appears to have fostered a certain optimism within the Finnish military establishment regarding Sweden's potential willingness to assist Finland in the event of a future crisis.

Nevertheless, there remained some definite differences of opinion and emphasis, as well as enthusiasm, on the question of regional cooperation between the four countries. Following Stauning's clear rejection of the idea of a Nordic defence union in a speech in Lund in Sweden in March 1937, Denmark began to take a more passive role, increasingly verging on that of a mere observer, in joint discussions. Norway too, where concern about national

58. Selén 1980, p. 218.

security aroused relatively little political debate, tended to favour a cautious approach. Interest in the idea of closer ties, particularly in the area of joint security, was ultimately most concentrated in Sweden and Finland, a fact reflected in the numerous discussions held between the two countries' foreign ministers, Richard Sandler and Rudolf Holsti, in which bilateral security policy problems became a regular feature from the autumn of 1937 onwards. Some difficulties were nevertheless created by the fact that contacts between the Finnish and Swedish governments and armed forces, although covering similar ground in some areas, took place largely independently of each other, and thus tended to acquire different sets of emphasis. For both the Finnish military establishment and government, however, the main source of concern focused around their joint uncertainty about how far Finland could realistically assume Sweden, with her long history of neutrality, would be willing to go in developing closer links and committing herself to some sort of alliance relationship, however loose.

Indicative of the moves that were made towards developing a greater measure of Scandinavian cooperation was the joint decision taken by the four Nordic countries to drop their support for continued sanctions against Italy in July 1936, after they had proved mostly ineffective.[59] Subsequent discussions at the conference of Nordic foreign ministers held in Copenhagen in July 1938 led to the issuing of a joint declaration by the four Scandinavian countries, together with Holland and Belgium, formally revoking all six states' commitment to Article 16 of the League's Charter covering the imposition of sanctions.[60] This decision was undoubtedly unwelcome to Rudolf Holsti, who continued to pin his hopes on the various plans being developed in a number of West European countries aimed at reinforcing the position and influence of the League of Nations and restoring international confidence in the organisation.

An important background factor shaping the ideas of both Swedish and Finnish politicians in their joint discussions, and one which led to both countries gradually abandoning their commitment to the League of Nations in favour of a more regionally-based

59. Jakobson 1955, p. 53.
60. Paasivirta 1968, p. 96.

approach to their security problems, was the increasing tension affecting Soviet-German relations. Should war erupt between these two powers, there might be little, it was increasingly recognised, to prevent the conflict spreading to embrace the Scandinavian countries as well. Fear of this possibility was central to the reassessment of the Nordic region's defence capabilities which gathered momentum in both Sweden and Finland, and which led to the introduction of significantly increased defence budgets in Sweden in 1936 and 1938 and, rather more belatedly, in Finland in the spring of 1938, with the approval of an extensive defence procurement programme.

While attention in Sweden tended to focus on the growing threat posed by Germany's rapid military expansion, in Finland the downturn in international relations served to further fuel the well-established fears centred on the threat posed by the Soviet Union to Finnish security, and increase overall Finnish sensitivity on issues related to the Soviet Union. The question mark in Finnish minds over the true nature of Soviet attitudes towards Finland had gained added weight following the spread of the news in political circles that the Soviet envoy in Helsinki, E. Assmus, had informed Prime Minister Kivimäki in the summer of 1935 that, in the event of an European crisis, the Red Army might well be forced to occupy part of Finland in order to protect Soviet interests.[61] Finnish suspicions over possible Soviet plans were similarly reinforced by a speech made in Leningrad in November 1936 by Andrei Zhdanov, head of the influential Leningrad party organisation, in which he accused Finland of hatching plans for allowing her territory to be used by Central European powers in possible future attacks against the Soviet Union.[62]

The continuing deterioration in the international climate and accompanying rise in tension in Europe, highlighted by the German occupation of Austria in March 1938, only increased the sense of pessimism and uncertainty about the future already existing among the small states of Europe. In the Scandinavian region, this was reflected in the decision by Finland and Sweden to begin discussions on the possible fortification of the Åland

61. Kivimäki 1965, p. 93.
62. On the details of Zhdanov's choice of words, see Mylly 1983, p. 104.

Islands and initiate a review of the clauses in the 1921 international agreement covering the area's demilitarised status. Through a joint agreement on the defence of the Islands, both countries believed they would be better placed to guarantee their territorial security in an international crisis and remain outside any potential European conflagration. This new initiative marked a significant change of attitude on the Swedish side and, to a lesser extent, on the Finnish side as well. The replacement of earlier Swedish anxieties about sovereignty and local autonomy with more pressing security concerns and the recognition of the Islands' role in both countries' security, together with a growth in Finnish willingness to consider some form of Swedish participation in the defence of the area, saw a new interest in discussions on both sides.

It was generally believed in Finland at the time of the beginning of the talks that the overall attitude among the Swedish leadership towards cooperation with Finland on the Åland issue was essentially positive, and that what opposition that had been evident within the Swedish press and elsewhere towards the idea was largely insignificant. Paasikivi's reports from Stockholm, for instance, gave little indication of the existence of a body of opposing opinion within the Swedish government.[63] Finnish foreign policy-makers remained, as a result, largely unaware of those within the Swedish government, led by the Social Democrat Minister of Finance, Ernst Wigforss, opposed to the notion of embroiling Sweden in any joint security policy moves in cooperation with Finland which might be interpreted by the Soviet Union as threatening the strategic balance in the northern Baltic. The weight of established opinion in Sweden, especially within liberal circles, behind the maintenance of Sweden's traditional neutrality, unfettered by any alliance-type relationship with Finland, seems to have been generally overlooked by Finnish negotiators.

Opinions in Sweden and Finland on the details of what would constitute an adequate defence plan for the Islands tended to differ somewhat, particularly between the Finnish and Swedish High Commands. This difference of opinion focused mainly on the

63. Carlgren 1977, pp. 161—3.

level of fortification envisaged as necessary to guarantee an effective defence presence in the area. Finnish military planners initially visualised siting permanent defence installations on both the southernmost islands within the archipelago and the main island, while their Swedish colleagues preferred to see installations restricted to the southern islands. This did not prove a long-lasting difference of opinion, however, as subsequent discussions in the autumn of 1938 saw both Mannerheim and the Finnish government come round to the Swedish view.[64] The most critical aspect of the talks, and the one which provided the most problems for both sides, covered the question of what forces were to be given responsibility for the defence of the Islands, and whether units from the Finnish mainland and locally-recruited units should be supplemented with detachments from the Swedish armed forces. Any commitment by Sweden to station forces on the Islands would have effectively compromised Sweden's neutral status in a future conflict involving Finland, as the Swedish side was well aware. The implications of this problem for both countries were soon highlighted at the time of the Czechoslovak crisis in the autumn of 1938, when both countries put their armed forces on alert and began preparations for possible further action. Sweden's ultimate attitude towards military cooperation with Finland, however, never came to be tested at this stage, following the defusing of the situation with the signing of the Munich agreement.[65]

The Finnish authorities had optimistically expected that the local population on the Islands would support the defence plan, and be willing to cooperate in its implementation. Not surprisingly, the need to respect the local population's special status and linguistic position, as part of any new security arrangement, received its fair share of emphasis in Sweden. Local support for the fortification proposals and for the other arrangements planned was initially forthcoming from Carl Björkman, the effective head of local government on the Islands, in a speech in June 1938. The position of the speaker of the regional assembly, Julius Sundblom, on the issue, however, was less clear. Various attempts were made

64. Jakobson 1955, pp. 72, 114, Ehrensvärd 1966, pp. 111, 114—5; T. Soikkanen 1983, pp. 209, 211, 213—4; Suomi 1973, p. 224.
65. Wahlbäck 1968A, pp. 95—101.

by both Finland and Sweden to influence his opinion and win over his support for the plan.[66] As pressure built up on Sundblom and the local population to accede to the proposal, Sundblom, making full use of his role as editor of the local paper *Åland*, decided to go on to the counter-offensive against what he saw as a campaign to force the local population's hand on the issue. Sundblom was successful in coordinating a declaration, made public in August 1938 and signed by a large majority of the representatives of the local assembly, questioning the wisdom of the fortification plans, and in organising a mass march in Mariehamn later in the autumn calling for a review of the plans and greater local consultation.[67] Further indicative of the strength of feeling which built up against any over-hasty implementation of the plans was the vote of no-confidence received by Björkman in December in the local assembly, which led to his resignation soon after. It should be said, however, that this latter vote was more motivated by dissatisfaction with Björkman in general and the friction existing between him and Sundblom, than with his pro-fortification stand alone.

Much of the local resistance to the fortification idea lay in the widespread belief prevalent among the Islands' population that the Åland area faced no real threat of hostilities, and that the 1921 international agreement provided sufficient security guarantees. There was little recognition of the potential dangers surrounding the military vacuum in the area. The prospect of a change in the Islands' status, including the construction of permanent defence installations, was also automatically seen locally as likely to signal a new threat to the area's cultural integrity and independence, and to presage an inevitable upswing in the pressures for fennicisation. Preservation of the status quo therefore was looked upon as important, both politically and culturally.

During the course of the discussions held between the Finnish and Swedish authorities on the question in Helsinki in the autumn of 1938, both sides attempted to convince the Sundblom-led delegation of the need for local flexibility, but to no real avail.

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66. *Åland* 15.6.1938; Herman Mattsson 2.11.1960; Salminen 1979, pp. 186—7; Viktor Strandfelt 15.8.1961.
67. *Åland* 7.9., 17.9.1938; AU 11.9.1938; Salminen 1979, p. 197; *Åland* 13.1.1962.

Although refusing to concede to these requests for cooperation, Sundblom did not, however, reject them completely, for fear of overplaying his hand. Instead, he called for what he described as 'better proposals'. Sundblom, together with the other members of the Åland delegation, was essentially opposed to any form of fortification, but nevertheless realised that an agreement might be reached between Sweden and Finland regardless, in which case it was important to ensure that the Islands' population had some say in its shaping and implementation.[68] Agreement was, in fact, reached towards the end of the year between the two countries, as a result of their joint diplomatic and military talks, on the framework of a defence agreement covering the Islands. The Stockholm plan, as it was referred to, and which was officially approved by both governments in January 1939, allowed for the fortification of the southernmost islands within the Åland archipelago, the stationing of ground forces and anti-aircraft units on the main island, and the formation of a number of naval squadrons to defend the area. The door was left open, however, on the sensitive issue of direct Swedish participation, as the plan included no binding commitment on Sweden to provide military assistance, should Finland decide to request it; this was made purely voluntary and dependent on Sweden's own interpretation of the situation.[69]

In line with its increasing commitment to Scandinavian neutrality and the growing reservations felt towards Germany and German intentions, various efforts were made by the Cajander government to put a brake on closer links developing between Finland and Germany. A number of political groups, military figures, writers and artists, however, continued to maintain sometimes quite prominent contacts with Germany. This fact, together with the steady rise in international tension, hardly helped to calm Soviet suspicions over the real extent of Finland's determination to resist possible future German advances. Soviet distrust, as a result, did not significantly diminish during the course of 1938, a fact which led to an increase in behind the scenes Soviet attempts to obtain

68. Boheman II 1964, pp. 75—6; Hugo Johansson 16.8.1961.
69. Wasastjerna 1962, p. 206: Killinen 1966, p. 93.

some rather more concrete Finnish commitment to resisting the spread of German influence. Indicative of this was the Soviet request, bypassing official diplomatic channels, made in the wake of the Austrian Anschluss to the Finnish authorities, and communicated through the person of Boris Yartsev, a junior secretary at the Soviet embassy in Helsinki, for firm guarantees that, in the event of a war in Europe, Finland would not only refuse Germany any assistance, but also be prepared to repulse any possible German landing in Finland aimed at clearing the way for an attack on Leningrad.[70] In its reply, the Cajander government stressed Finland's continued commitment to a Scandinavian-style form of neutrality and readiness to defend both her territory and neutrality against any possible aggressor, but proved reluctant to go any further than this. The government's determination to pursue a policy of friendly relations with Scandinavia and the rest of Western Europe, while at the same time avoiding a close relationship with Germany, was similarly stressed by Cajander in a number of public speeches later the same autumn.[71]

These Finnish assurances, however, failed to satisfy the Soviet leadership of Finland's good intentions, or calm Soviet defence concerns. Soviet hopes focused instead on the possibility of seeing Finland disengaged from the Nordic neutrals and linked to an alliance arrangement more directly aimed at underpinning Soviet security interests.[72] It was precisely fear of such a closer linkage with the Soviet Union which lay behind the Finnish government's reluctance to come any way towards the Soviet Union's proposals. No one felt sure of the possible consequences for the country's international position and future independence of action should Finland agree to any pact of assistance of the type offered by Yartsev, allowing for military aid and the transfer of Soviet army units to Finland in the event of a German attack. The essential difficulty facing Finnish security policy remained how to reconcile maintenance of Finnish neutrality with guaranteeing the defence of the Soviet Union's north-western border, and Leningrad

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70. Jakobson 1955; pp. 6—10.
71. Ibid., pp. 77—8; Suomi 1973, pp. 201—3, 211.
72. On the Yartsev discussions, see Mylly 1983, p. 205; T. Soikkanen 1983 pp. 216—9.

in particular.[73] While the notion of a German attack against the Soviet Union through southern Finland was not considered completely impossible within the Finnish political leadership, it was nevertheless looked upon as highly unlikely. This was a natural enough conclusion when the whole basis of Finnish defence thinking had up until then been predicated on the assumption that any possible attack against the country would come, not from the West, but from the East.

The Munich agreement, which saw Czechoslovakia partitioned at Germany's behest with the West's blessing, provided significant additional food for thought for Finnish politicians, putting a number of new perspectives on the German question. Although opinions about its long-term implications on the international situation were divided, it was widely appreciated, both within the government parties and within certain elements of the National Coalition opposition, that the agreement would inevitably increase the difficulties facing Finland and the other small countries of Europe. Particular concern was aroused by the negotiating tactics employed by Germany in the Sudetenland dispute and the central role of military pressure in them. It was widely feared that the future would see a spread of this style of diplomacy. These pessimistic conclusions ran strongly counter to the stance adopted by the more conservative minority wing of the National Coalition Party, as voiced by such figures as the vice-chairman of the party, Edvin Linkomies, and aired in the pages of *Uusi Suomi.* This group argued instead that, as Germany's position in Central Europe had been significantly strengthened as a result of the Munich settlement, Finland would be well advised to concentrate on developing closer links with Germany. It was suggested, for example, that Finland should follow Germany's lead and withdraw from the League of Nations.[74] Germany's strengthened position was tacitly welcomed by those further to the Right, as reflected in the pages of *Ajan Suunta,* which saw the new situation as indirectly serving to advance Finland's own interests in preparing the way for a renewed presentation of Finnish territorial

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73. For the reasons behind the rejection of the Yartsev proposals, see Suomi 1973, p. 372; Mylly 1983, p. 205; T. Soikkanen 1983 pp. 218—31.
74. T. Soikkanen 1983, p. 227.

demands over East Karelia.[75] This rather singular interpretation of events, however, failed to win any support outside the narrow confines of the extreme Right.

As a whole, the impact of the Sudetenland question and the Munich agreement on opinion both within the government and outside it, as well as within the armed forces, led to the emergence of an increasing consensus for a policy of further Nordic cooperation and closer collaboration in the field of joint regional security. The aftermath of the Munich agreement saw a distinct downturn in the importance attached to the potential of Britain and France to influence European developments and their capability of acting as counterbalancing forces to German aggrandizement, in the minds of Finnish foreign policy-makers and within those sections of opinion which had previously been favourably disposed towards the Western powers. Munich also served, indirectly, to divert attention away from the thorny question of Finland's unresolved relations with the Soviet Union and the need to make a determined effort to answer Soviet security anxieties. The Soviet Union's exclusion from the Munich negotiations served to give further force to the view, which gained ground in Finland and elsewhere, that the Soviet Union had little more than a marginal role to play in a Europe that seemed to be becoming increasingly dominated by Germany.

Overall, the pattern of international events during the latter half of the 1930s and the growth of tension which accompanied it served to eliminate many of the differences of views on security issues which had characterised and divided Finnish political opinion in earlier years, and contributed to the achievement of a new measure of consensus on a number of central questions, such as increased defence spending. As the problematic nature of Finland's position and the fact of the relatively limited means at her disposal to influence developments came to be better appreciated, so the need to play down narrow partisan interest became increasingly apparent. Growing mistrust came to be felt towards all the major powers and their political intentions, as witnessed in the gradual but definite spread of critical attitudes towards Germany which

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75. AS 4.10., 9.10.1938.

took place, embracing even a number of conservative groups traditionally identified with pro-German sympathies, and in the emergence of a parallel, new critical mood on the Left towards the Soviet Union. This development helped reinforce support for aligning Finland more closely with the Scandinavian neutrals. Despite this shift towards the political middle-ground, and the existence of a majority coalition government with wide parliamentary support, Finnish politics nevertheless continued to give all the impression, at least to some commentators and foreign observers, of being almost as divided as ever, most particularly as a result of the continued high political profile enjoyed by the right-wing opposition.

5. The armed forces

The introduction of the new regionally-based mobilisation structure which took place between 1932 and 1934, together with the increasing sense of concern felt within the military establishment over the country's defence capability, focused attention on the extent of the equipment problem facing the armed forces. Even the High Command itself seems to have been initially unaware, at least in part, of the true state of armament stocks. It took until around mid-decade for an adequate picture of the armed forces' overall requirements, necessary to allow them to be fully operational, to be built up. Instead of being based on any overall programme designed to cover total requirements, procurement plans drawn up during the first half of the decade were, as a result, largely comprised of a series of self-contained, smaller-scale programmes, formulated with an eye more to their chances of securing budget approval than anything else. Inevitably, these tended to contain only requests for equipment which was considered immediately necessary.[76] Detailed estimates covering the equipment requirements, in terms of weaponry, logistics support and other matériel, for the minimum of nine divisions envisaged under the new system, were only drawn up in the latter stages of its introduction by its main architect, Colonel Grandell. It was

76. Terä-Tervasmäki 1973, pp. 177—82; Seppälä 1974, pp. 75—7.

only then that the full implications of the army's equipment shortfall became clear. The scale of the problem, and the fact that even by 1935 the armed forces remained severely under-equipped, came as something of an unwelcome surprise, even to the General Staff.

A new basic equipment procurement programme based on Grandell's revised estimates was drawn up, and the first small orders, funded by special budget allocations, were placed in 1936 and 1937.[77] In an effort to consolidate forward planning for this programme and to provide information on future likely equipment requirements, a new department to handle supply issues had been set up within the Defence Ministry in January 1936, headed by General Grandell. Efforts were also put in hand to assess the economic aspects of improving the country's defence capability. In May 1937, the government appointed a special all-party committee to study the whole question of future military needs and defence spending in the light of the military's proposed procurement programme. The committee's findings, published in February 1938, concluded that a total of some 2,911 million marks would be required to successfully carry through the programme. A revised special defence budget allowing for this expenditure, minus a token 200 million marks, was drawn up. This called for spreading costs over a period of six years from 1938 to 1944, with annual allocations divided more or less equally over the whole period, to be funded in part by a package of additional income and property taxes. After only brief discussion, it was quickly approved in April by a massive majority of 176-6.[78] Such a degree of unanimity, embracing virtually the entire political spectrum, had never previously been reached on defence questions, and marked the final acceptance by the Social Democrats and Agrarians, in particular, of the need for increased defence spending, to which they had both traditionally been resolutely opposed. Although this swing was clearly influenced by the growing concern felt about the country's defence capability at a time of increasing international tension, the length of the programme's proposed timetable indicates that no immediate

77. Terä-Tervasmäki 1973, pp. 187—9; Seppälä 1974, pp. 78—9.
78. Terä-Tervasmäki 1973, pp. 193—6.

military threat was perceived as existing.

Among those most satisfied with the decision was the chairman of the Defence Council, Mannerheim, who from mid-decade onwards had become increasingly vocal in his criticism of the way political decisions on defence issues were handled, particularly the slowness of progress on any new proposals and the fact that programmes were typically passed in reduced form, if at all.[79] Against this background, Parliament's decision in April 1938 to give the go-ahead for a new comprehensive programme was therefore all the more satisfying to Mannerheim, as it finally provided the armed forces with the resources to allow long-term planning aimed at eliminating the worst problems affecting their running and credibility. Developments on the international scene, and particularly the Czechoslovak crisis in the autumn of 1938, however, served to convince Mannerheim that the threat of war, and of one possibly likely to involve Finland, was growing rapidly. This saw Mannerheim come to the conclusion that, despite its size, the approved programme, because of its long timetable, would after all be inadequate to guarantee Finland's short-term security. Similar sentiments were expressed in a report presented to the government by the Defence Council later the same autumn, which painted a particularly bleak picture of the pattern of international events and their likely future development. This report was subsequently followed up with a series of requests for further additional military expenditure going significantly beyond the figures contained in the already approved procurement programme. These were particularly designed to strengthen the country's capability in such areas as field artillery and anti-aircraft defences, which had previously tended to be given less resources than the infantry.[80]

A major factor hindering rapid implementation of the new procurement plan, as with others before it, lay in the inflexibility of the military's decision-making machinery and the difficulties typically encountered in gaining any unanimity of opinion within

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79. Väinö Tanner 7.12.1955. See also Tanner's speech in Naantali on 17.7.1938, reported in SS 18.7.1938. For Mannerheim's dissatisfaction during 1936 and 1937, see Heinrichs II 1959, p. 53; George Gripenberg: Dagbok 29.3., 31.3.1937.
80. Seppälä 1974, pp. 81—4; Selén 1980, pp. 296—7; Puolustusneuvoston pöytäkirja 6.8.1938 ja liite 1 (SA).

the armed forces on the choice of suitable new weapons, design criteria and operating requirements. This often served to delay the decision-making process necessary to allow production to begin or orders to be placed. Illustrative of this were the disputes which took place over machine gun design, artillery grenade ammunition and anti-tank weaponry. Discussions on these equipment issues were not helped by the cool relations existing between the High Command and the domestic armaments industry from which, for political reasons, the army was forced to purchase the majority of its requirements. By 1939, it became increasingly difficult to direct any equipment orders abroad. Production at the army's own manufacturing plants, such as the State Artillery Factory, where manufacture began behind schedule in 1938, was also slow to come on stream. In the final analysis, however, it would seem that the military leadership relied on the assumption that, should Finland find herself directly threatened, Sweden would be willing to provide military assistance or allow the powerful Swedish arms industry to supply Finland to make up for what equipment deficiencies existed.[81]

Much discussion was also expended on the question of the need to clarify the chain of command in the highest echelons of the armed forces, an issue which had been the subject of some dispute from the early 1930s onwards. Mannerheim's central role in the command hierarchy, in his capacity as chairman of the Defence Council, was underpinned early on, at the time of the appointment of General Hugo Österman as commander of the armed forces in succession to General Sihvo in 1933, following President Svinhufvud's decision that Österman was to be subordinated to Mannerheim on operational questions. Mannerheim declined nevertheless to formally take on the task of overall commander-in-chief, with all its attendant responsibilities, preferring instead to maintain his distance from the everyday running of the armed forces and devote himself to longer-term policy planning and coordination. The potential tension existing between the Chairman of the Defence Council and the Minister of Defence was

81. Lauri Harvila 14.12.1982, 12.1.1983; Terä-Tervasmäki 1973, pp. 192, 198. Also see the Swedish military attaché's memorandum of his discussion with Mannerheim on 19.5.1939 (KrA).

highlighted at the time of the appointment of Juho Niukkanen as Defence Minister in 1937, when the latter made a bid to extend his share of control over military decision-making. This tension was alleviated, only partially, however, by the command rationalisation introduced in 1938, designed to introduce a clearer division of responsibilities between the conflicting parties. This new structure subordinated the operations section of the General Staff, which was responsible for drawing up general defence planning on the ground, to the chairman of the Defence Council. The commander of the armed forces, General Österman, together with his personal staff and the major part of the General Staff, the head of supplies and logistics, General Grandell, and the Defence Ministry's administrative department, were for their part subordinated to the Minister of Defence.[82] This new arrangement failed, however, to adequately define the status of the armed forces' three main serving generals, General Österman, overall formal commander of the armed forces, General K. L. Oesch, head of the General Staff, and General Harald Öhqvist, commander of the army, or provide a clear upward chain of command. Symptomatic of this was the fact that, although General Österman owed first allegiance to the Defence Minister, he was also responsible both to the President and to the chairman of the Defence Council. General Oesch also found himself faced with a similar conflict of responsibilities.

Problems also remained in the area of the defence establishment's continuing uneasy, although somewhat improved relationship with the rest of society. Much of this tension had traditionally derived from the close identification, in many cases consciously cultivated by the officer corps, of the army with the White army of the Civil War, and the tendency, particularly evident in the paramilitary Civil Guard, to look to the latter as something of an ideal. The events surrounding the Mäntsälä incident, however, had served to put this attachment to the White tradition into a new perspective, by forcing the armed forces and the Civil Guard to come to terms with the requirements imposed upon on them in

82. Jyränki 1967, pp. 34—5; Terä-Tervasmäki 1973, pp. 167—70; Niukkanen 1951, pp. 30—5.

terms of responsibility and loyalty towards the government of the day, whatever its political complexion. In the follow-up to the incident, a number of Civil Guard regional commanders were replaced and various local commanders relieved of their duties for their compliance in events. While the head of the Civil Guard General Staff, Colonel Väinö Palojärvi, was replaced by Colonel A. E. Martola, at the behest of the regular army, no major command reshuffle took place, however. The lack of any thorough purge of the Civil Guard in fact saw a number of calls, not only from the Left, but also from within the Agrarian Party and the Swedish People's Party for more radical changes in personnel.[83] Disciplinary action, transfers and warnings were also forthcoming in the wake of the incident for a small number of regular army officers.[84]

The experience of the Mäntsälä incident came to serve as a powerful example to the officer corps within the regular army of the dangers inherent in any attempt to influence political developments and, by extension, to dissuade any such attempts in the future. Mäntsälä also had an impact on the development of the Civil Guard. The latter's organisation underwent a significant shift in emphasis during the rest of the decade, as a result of its involvement in the Mäntsälä incident and partly as a result of its switch to a regionally-based structure coordinated with the regular army, and its gradual shift away from being an organisation with clear political ambitions to one fulfilling the role of a neutral volunteer reserve. The extent of this move away from political involvement was highlighted at the time of the formation of Cajander's centre-left coalition in 1937. Although undoubtedly seen by many in the Civil Guard as an unwelcome development, the latter failed to provoke any form of demonstration or attempt to influence the situation from within the organisation.

Concomitant with this shift towards greater political equilibrium within the country's military and paramilitary forces, there was also a general move within society as a whole during the latter half of the 1930s towards a more favourable attitude towards defence issues and the need for a viable defence force to protect Finnish interests and security. This was influenced to a significant degree

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83. Mylly 1983, pp. 43—4; Wrede 1933, p. 5.
84. Kylkirauta 1/1935; Raikkala III 1964, pp. 53—4; Yrjö Hakanen 9.3.1979; Edistyspuolueen eduskuntaryhmän ptk., 5.8.1933 (VA).

by developments on the international arena, following the spread of a new sense of insecurity deriving from the increasing tension existing between the major powers in Europe and the growing realisation of the security problems involved in Finland's relations with the latter, particularly the Soviet Union and Germany. As developments progressed, so both countries began to be increasingly seen as representing comparably dangerous and unpredictable destabilising factors. The spread of this general perception led to the emergence of a growing measure of consensus on international issues across a significant section of the political spectrum, and one which remained largely unaffected by the differences of opinion which continued to exist on more purely domestic questions. Changes were also taking place with regard to domestic issues, as the division in society left by the Civil War became less dominant and all-consuming and as memories of the conflict receded ever further into the past, and, above all, as the domestic political climate improved and conservative resistance to the Social Democrats diminished. The general improvement in social conditions and the rise in the standard of living typical of the period also contributed to this. Against this background of international and domestic developments therefore, the armed forces came increasingly to be looked upon much less as the defenders of partisan conservative interests, as previously, particularly on the Left, and more as the guarantors of interests and values held in common. While there nevertheless remained much in the army's official attitudes to its own traditions and past history, and particularly with regard to its continued emphasis on underlining its inheritance from the White Army of 1918, to alienate left-wing opinion, the overall pattern of political and social developments, and their tendency towards greater social consensus, ultimately dominated in shaping a more positive attitude.

The powerful role of tradition continued to be especially evident in the organisation and distribution of resources within the armed forces. This was reflected in the continued reliance, both conscious and unconscious, in much of military thinking on the experience of the Civil War. By virtue of the latter's almost total dissimilarity with the type of war which Finland as an independent country might expect to face, this served to distort

military perspectives. Typical of the conservativism this style of thinking encouraged, and drawing on the wider attachment to many ideas associated with pre-mechanised warfare which still existed, was the continuing prominence given to the infantry at the expense of the other arms in strategic and tactical planning. General Nenonen was among the relatively few figures within the military hierarchy who spoke up for strengthening non-infantry forces. The influence exercised by this conservative brand of thinking was well illustrated in the debate which developed from 1936 onwards surrounding the development of modern anti-tank defences and which, despite all the time and effort devoted to it, produced very little in terms of tangible progress towards developing a viable equipment or manpower base.[85] At the same time, no attempt was made to disband the army's cavalry brigade, despite the poor showing of similar units in the First World War. Although admittedly fulfilling a useful peacetime training role, this took up resources which could have been better employed in developing more modern units.

Increasing emphasis was nevertheless put on providing modern combat training and tactical skills for conscripts who, after 1932, served a standard period of military service of 350 days for other ranks and 440 days for those training as officers and non-commissioned officers. Regular exercises for reserve units were also introduced under the 1932 legislation. From 1936 onwards, reservists were assembled into regionally-based battalions and batteries to provide them with as wide a range of experience as possible of the type of operations that they would meet in the event of mobilisation. The success of the Jäger officers in consolidating their position in the higher echelons of the army following the disputes around the turn of the decade was reflected in the fact that by the latter half of the decade all the army's generalships, with the exception of two in the artillery, were in their hands. Lower down the hierarchy, the composition of the officer corps, however, was widening and by 1939 nearly half of the army's regular serving officers were products of Finland's new Officer Training School.[86] Many of the problems associated with the

85. Niukkanen 1951, pp. 175—6.
86. By mid-1939, officers trained in Finland's own military training schools accounted for approx. 47 % of the officer corps.

differing military backgrounds and training experience among members of the officer corps in earlier years had also either disappeared, or lost much of their former significance by this stage.

6. Foreign trade in the latter half of the 1930s

The early years of the decade had seen Finnish exports experience a period of rapid and substantial growth in the wake of the 1931 devaluation of the mark. The effects of this had filtered through relatively quickly to the economy as a whole, leading to a general economic recovery from 1933 onwards. The balance of trade surplus which accumulated as a result, totalling over 6,000 million marks over a four year period, was largely used to pay off the country's foreign debt. While serving to strengthen the country's financial position abroad, this policy, however, effectively prevented the country from reaping all the possible benefits the country's trade surplus might have brought in terms of encouraging an increase in investment. The upward swing in export earnings continued into 1936, which witnessed a 15% rise over the previous year's export figures for the timber and paper industry. The latter continued to dominate the overall export effort with its 75% share of total export earnings. Exports of paper and pulp showed the highest rates of growth. Finnish timber exports benefited from the improved world prices which emerged on the world market as a result of the 1935 international ETEC agreement aimed at limiting over-supply, which had been growing at an alarming rate.[87]

Towards the end of 1937, however, Finnish export prospects began to fall off as a result of growing international insecurity and a new sense of caution in international trade, spurred by fears of a possible repeat of the 1930 depression. The immediate impact of this downturn was felt in a rapid drop in the overall growth in the export of timber and paper products, which in turn had a knock-on effect on the country's domestic economic development. The failure of the timber and paper industry to secure new orders to replace those lost led to reductions in production; no moves,

87. Kertomus SPKL:n toiminnasta v. 1936 (SMKL archive); Halme 1955, p. 288.

however, were made to reduce wages in order to improve the industry's competitiveness, as had taken place in the early years of the decade. While export earnings for 1937 as a whole showed an increase of 29.9% over those for the previous year, they were down some 10.5% by 1938. Marketing difficulties were experienced across the entire range of timber and paper-based products. The continuing downturn in the American economy was seen as likely to further weaken export prospects for timber and paper on the world market, while growing Soviet price reductions on timber only served to further cut the ground away from under the feet of both Finnish and Swedish exporters.[88] Despite these problems, however, some positive, if albeit modest progress was seen in the country's state-subsidised dairy exports. This was nevertheless not sufficient to alter the overall pattern of development, which saw the country's balance of trade, which had been deteriorating steadily since 1935, finally go into deficit in 1938.

Britain continued to remain Finland's most important export market, both for the timber and paper industries, as well as for agriculture. In the case of timber and paper, Britain also served as an important intermediary. British importers played an important role in marketing Finnish goods and shipping them onwards to non-European markets, such as South Africa and Egypt.[89] Penetration of these new market areas was also made easier as the range of Finnish diplomatic representation was extended to cover these regions. In the wake of the depression and Hitler's rise to power, exports to Finland's other traditional major market, Germany, had initially fallen off substantially and only slowly began to show signs of rallying. Recovery of Finland's earlier market-share, however, was hampered by the German authorities' introduction of a trade policy aimed at reinforcing national economic self-sufficiency and reducing reliance on foreign suppliers. A significant rise in timber exports to Germany was nevertheless recorded towards the end of 1937 and early 1938, fuelled by Germany's expanding rearmament and construction programmes.[90] Early 1939 brought a more general upswing in exports,

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88. Halme 1955, pp. 287—96; Kertomus SPKL:n toiminnasta v. 1938; *Kauppalehti* 25.9., 13.11.1937, 14.1., 17.5.1938; *Mercator* 16.4., 7.5., 28.5.1938.
89. Jack Hill 17.10.1980.
90. Halme 1955, p. 292; Hbl 28.10.1937.

with better timber sales and a number of encouraging paper contracts.

While the increasing need for a more concerted and coordinated export promotion effort abroad was well recognised in the timber and paper industry, as well as in government circles and within the Finnish Export Association, moves towards developing such a programme were hampered by the uneasy relations existing between the three sides involved. The role of government and the diplomatic corps became particularly highlighted as the importance of the efficient exchange of commercial information and official bilateral trade agreements became increasingly emphasised. The experience of the depression in reducing Finland's traditional export markets had focused attention on the need to develop new markets outside Europe. New diplomatic missions and consular facilities were established in response to this in Rio de Janeiro in 1937, and Pretoria, Cape Town and Alexandria in 1939, as the foreign ministry, after some fifteen years of finding its feet, together with the government as a whole, became more aware of the benefits to be gained from a well developed diplomatic service in terms of advancing Finnish commercial interests.[91] A major problem in the way of improving cooperation between the various parties involved in promoting Finnish exports, however, lay in their very composition. The continuing dominance of timber and paper exports, consistently accounting for some three-quarters of exports, introduced a dangerous bias in Finnish trade, effectively making it, and by extension the whole economy, susceptible to even relatively small-scale market fluctuations. Some progress was nevertheless made in reducing the country's dependence on timber, prices for which tended to vary the most, and in increasing the proportion of higher value-added products. Both timber and paper exports continued, however, to remain dogged by their concentration in a few major markets.

The friction existing between the timber and paper industry, the Export Association and government was not eased by the unwillingness of export managers in the former, secure in the knowledge of their industry's dominance of the country's exports, to seriously countenance significant cooperation with other

91. Paasivirta 1968, pp. 219—23.

sectors of the economy, or to back the efforts of the Export Association (known from 1938 onwards as the Finnish Foreign Trade Association). The latter received most of its backing from government, which was keenest to see a wider range of non-timber and paper-related goods exported. The timber and paper industry was similarly reluctant to recognise the potential benefit to be derived from greater governmental involvement in promoting exports, seeing the small numbers of diplomats engaged in full-time commercial work as indicating a lack of real commitment on the government's part, and as virtually meaningless in practical terms alongside their own efforts. Dissatisfaction within the industry was only further aggravated by the fact that a significantly larger proportion of government assistance was channelled to the Foreign Trade Association for assessing new export markets than to the industry's own central federation for its market research projects.[92] Contacts between the leading timber and paper companies and the Cajander government were particularly cool, a situation explained in part by the differences in political sympathies separating them. Throughout Cajander's term of office, the industry voiced its criticism on everything from the budget to labour politics.[93] The government's strong parliamentary majority, which made it less susceptible to pressure from industry than some of its predecessors, only reinforced the sometimes pugnacious attitudes towards government typical within the industry.

Overall foreign trade performance during the 1920s and 1930s, as measured in terms of balance of trade and balance of payments, both of which had typically been in deficit in the years prior to the First World War, was fairly positive, with both indicators showing a surplus for the period as a whole. The 1930s also saw Finland successfully reduce her dependence on foreign loan capital, thereby increasing her economic independence, moving from a point in 1931 when foreign loans amounted to 9,200 million marks to a stage at the end of the decade when they were virtually completely paid off. The same period also saw the composition of imports change, with the total share of consumer goods falling substantially and being replaced by greater imports of raw

92. SPKL:n Ulkopoliittinen valiokunta ptk., 8.12.1936 (SMKL archive).
93. Kertomus SPKL:n toiminnasta v. 1937, v. 1938 (SMKL archive).

materials and semi-finished goods to supply Finland's expanding industrial base. Little significant, however, was achieved in reducing the dominant position of the timber and paper industry as the country's major exporter, although the latter did prove able to increase the proportion of higher value-added goods in its exports. The imbalance in the country's export effort was nevertheless to remain a major problem.

Significant developments had also taken place in modernising Finnish industry and improving the level of Finnish technical expertise by the 1930s. Substantial room for further modernisation and improvements nevertheless remained. The pace of developments in European and international industry and technological research only underlined the challenge facing the country in trying to reduce the gap existing between Finnish levels of industrial performance and sophistication and those in the major European and international industrial powers. The lack of a coordinated technical research policy and adequate financial resources, or any systematic programme of training abroad, were also factors which served to hold back progress in this field. Despite economic and political upheavals, Germany remained, as in previous years, the main source of new production ideas and techniques for Finnish industry, and the focus of Finnish technical and industrial interest. Familiarity with developments in America and contacts with American industry, as with industry in the rest of the English-speaking world, continued at a low level.

7. Cultural relations during the 1930s

Independence had brought a new opening-up of contacts with international developments in the literary and artistic fields. The level and degree of contact proved, however, to be closely tied to the internal mood of the country, and thus susceptible to wide fluctuations and variations. The shift in the domestic climate which took place at the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s, and the growth in the influence of radical right-wing opinion it witnessed, had a largely negative impact on the country's international cultural relations. Right-wing thinkers and commentators followed the same simplistic style of argument in their attitudes to the arts as they applied to social questions.

Figures in the field were divided into two opposing castes: those seen as defending and promoting national interests, and those standing for marxist and liberal values. Writers, artists and others involved in the arts were quickly branded according to their actual or assumed political and ideological sympathies. Those deemed as being of dubious loyalty were subjected to sometimes aggressive criticism from the Right; even the Finnish PEN Club was labelled a communist organisation by the right-wing press at one stage, and those identified with its activities and other undesirable ideas described as 'cultural Bolsheviks'.[94] While national and international ideas were consistently described in nationalist thinking as mutually-incompatible opposites, this did not mean nevertheless that nationalist writers and artists were forced to work in isolation, nor did it stop them from absorbing international influences in their work, or from having sympathies with cultural developments abroad. Conservative objections to international ideas only really extended, in the final analysis, to those which the Right itself deemed undesirable.

The sharp upswing in the more extreme aspects of nationalist sentiment which took place from 1932 and 1933 onwards fueled renewed argument on the language issue and reawakened many of the old antagonisms which had previously bedevilled relations between Finland and Sweden. Accusations and counter-accusations regarding the rights and position of the two linguistic communities in Finland again began to be exchanged with depressing regularity between the two countries. Adverse press comment in Sweden over what was described as the increasing 'persecution' of the Swedish-speaking population in Finland was often dismissed by Finnish-language commentators as the result of disinformation spread by the country's minority community. Attempts by various Swedish-speaking university figures to put the minority community's case in the Swedish press were similarly condemned within nationalist circles.[95] Statements appearing in Stockholm hinting that the Finnish-speaking community represented a more backward section of the population than its Swedish-speaking counterpart caused floods of protests from

94. AS 17.11.1933.
95. Hämäläinen 1968, pp. 194—6, 204; Klinge IV 1968, pp. 144—9, 174; AU 18.2.1931.

among Finnish-speaking students.

The worsening of the depression had a number of debilitating effects on the arts and cultural life in general, the most obvious being the economic stringencies it imposed, which served to hamper maintaining contacts abroad. Among the few major events in the international literary world during the early part of the decade at which Finnish writers were represented, were the third Scandinavian literary congress held in Oslo in 1930, and the world literary congress held in Paris in 1931.[96] The effects of the depression were also felt in a reduction in the amount of foreign literature translated. Even before this, translation policy had become the subject of some debate, as a result of the increasingly selective approach adopted by the country's leading publishers. The largely conservative management in the two major publishing houses of Otava and Werner Söderström, which together accounted for a significant share of the total book market, tended to see much of modern Western literature, and English-language literature in particular, as too liberal for their tastes. This was reflected, for example, in the decision not to translate much of the work of such authors as Ernest Hemingway and John Steinbeck.[97] Conservative nationalist thinkers such as Eino Railo were particularly vocal in their opposition to the translation of foreign literature, and advocated a greater reliance on home-grown talent, in preference to what was seen as the intellectually-dubious British and American literature of the period. The views of Railo and his like did not go completely unchallenged, however. Figures such as Lauri Viljanen, literary critic for *Helsingin Sanomat*, consistently argued for a more enlightened publishing policy towards quality foreign literature.[98] Swedish-language publishers, who typically enjoyed good contacts with publishers in mainland Sweden, often produced off-runs of works published there, including translations of foreign literature, and were thus able to offer a wide range of material, thereby keeping their readers

96. Suomen Kirjailijaliiton johtokunnan ptk., 13.1.1930, 20.3., 19.5.1931 (SKL archive).
97. Tarkka 1980, pp. 282—3; Maijaliisa Auterinen 1.11.1982; Arvi Kivimaa 17.9.1982.
98. Suomen Kirjailijaliiton johtokunnan ptk., 30.12.1934; *Valvoja* 1935, p. 106; L. Viljanen: Taisteleva humanismi (1936).

abreast of international literary developments. This relatively broad coverage of foreign literature in Swedish translation was carried over into the Swedish-language press, particularly in the case of *Hufvudstadsbladet,* which regularly carried a wide range of reviews of work by foreign writers, and to a lesser extent *Svenska Pressen.*

This division in attitudes on cultural questions between the two linguistic communities, at least the educated sections of those communities, was also echoed in their differing reactions to Hitler's rise to power in Germany in 1933. Reaction to developments in Germany came to represent something of a watershed in Finnish opinion, dividing it very clearly into those openly welcoming or sympathising with Hitler's political programme and those more critical of what had happened. While the majority of the Finnish-speaking intelligentsia and artistic community proved initially largely favourable towards the new Germany, the majority of their Swedish-speaking colleagues proved much less enthusiastic.

Nationalist, anti-communist views were typically significantly more common within the Finnish-speaking artistic community than within its Swedish-speaking counterpart. Mixed in with this was the sympathy with Germany deriving from the time of the Civil War. Attitudes were also widely shaped by the threat to the Finnish position seen as emanating from the Soviet Union. V. A. Koskenniemi was a classic example of the strength and persistence of this type of pro-German opinion. Seen against his interpretation of the Versailles peace as representing a major injustice against Germany, and his dislike of the Weimar régime, it was not entirely surprising that he should have welcomed Hitler's rise to power as the first real step on the road to German recovery. His positive attitude towards Hitler's new Germany was only reinforced by the latter's loudly-proclaimed commitment to the struggle against Communism and liberalism, both anathema to Koskenniemi. His admiration of Hitler's role as a national leader did not stop Koskenniemi, however, from expressing some criticism of various aspects of National Socialist philosophy and its subordination of the individual to the collective will.[99]

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99. US 22.1., 26.1.1936; Göran Stenius 25.5.1979.

A similarly sympathetic, if less openly admiring attitude towards developments in Germany was evident in the writings of the prominent literary critic Rafael Koskimies. The latter had little time for the criticism which emerged within British and French literary and artistic circles directed against National Socialism. In describing Hitler's virtues as a national leader, Koskimies does not seem to have been overly concerned by the fact that his rise to power had taken place at the expense of the overthrow of parliamentary democracy.[100] Koskimies nevertheless did not shut his eyes to the growing wave of anti-semitism in Germany, the burning of discredited books and the various purges of academic staff at German universities, all of which he condemned. A number of leading young writers also expressed satisfaction with the change of government in Germany. Mika Waltari, known for his conservative sympathies, writing in 1933, for instance, gave every impression of welcoming developments in Germany. Arvi Kivimaa's attitude to post-Nazi Germany was also generally positive, in contrast to his more critical view of France.[101]

Overall, there was relatively little sign of a critical or openly negative attitude towards post-1933 Germany among the bulk of the Finnish-speaking literary and artistic community, which clearly felt greater concern at the prospect of the further spread of Communism and the threat it posed for Western society. The Tulenkantajat group of young writers, which had burst on the literary scene with such effect in the latter 1920s and which might have been expected to act as a focus for anti-Nazi opinion, had lost most of its early dynamism by the early 1930s, eventually breaking up as a result of internal disagreements between its members. Among those who had been most prominently associated with the movement, Olavi Paavolainen initially adopted what appeared to be an uncommitted attitude to events, until the publication of his book *Kolmannen valtakunnan vieraana* (A guest of the Third Reich) in 1936, based on his personal observations of German society. The subject of heated debate on its appearance, this part travelogue, part political and cultural analysis contained an uneasy mixture of positive and critical comment. With its underlying

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100. Koskimies 1933, pp. 303—19.
101. *Maaseudun Tulevaisuus* 19.9.1933; Kivimaa 1933, pp. 72—7.

questioning of the ultimate wisdom of subordinating the individual so absolutely to the system, and its emphasis on the dominance of propaganda and other manipulative techniques in Nazi politics, it was nevertheless ultimately intended, and seen, as a criticism of the National Socialist system of government.[102] Elli Tompuri, the actress, made her opposition to Hitler plain from an early stage, organising poetry readings of work by German poets whose books had been among those burnt by the Nazis for their unacceptable views.[103] The group of liberals and more radical left-wing figures focused around the new *Tulenkantajat* magazine, which had been revived by Erkki Vala in 1932, was also highly critical of developments in Germany. Among the country's front-rank authors, perhaps F. E. Sillanpää was the most forthright in stating his commitment to Scandinavian democratic values and opposition to all forms of dictatorship, including fascism.[104]

The more critical tone of attitudes towards Germany within the Swedish-speaking artistic and literary community owed a lot to the latter's differing perspective on Finland's own history and social development. The rise and fall of the Lapua movement, together with the continuing forward march of radical national opinion within the Finnish-speaking majority, had seen increased value attached to the ideals of democracy and legitimacy and to Scandinavian political traditions among Swedish-speakers. The prominence of anti-Nazi opinion in Sweden, as reflected in the views of such leading Swedish writers as Per Lagerqvist and Eyvind Johnson, also had an influence on attitudes. Typical of the general tone of the mainstream of liberal-minded literary opinion within Swedish-speaking Finland, grouped around the magazine *Nya Argus,* was the critical review of Hitler, describing him as a dangerous demagogue committed to the rule of force, written by the writer and academic Hans Ruin, which appeared in the magazine soon after Hitler's takeover.[105] Eirik Hornborg and the

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102. See Olavi Paavolainen's letter of 7.5.1933 to Hellä Wuolijoki (Hellä Wuolijoki collection) and Pynnä 1975, pp. 61—5.
103. Tompuri 1944, pp.212—3.
104. See Sillanpää's letter of 20.11.1934 to Ragnar Holmström. Also SvD 23.11.1934; DN 23.2.1934; AS 23.11.1934.
105. *Nya Argus* 16.4.1933; Ruin: Gycklare och apostlar (1934). On the fate of the German translation of the latter, see Hbl 16.1.1938.

literary scholar Gunnar Castrén were also openly critical of Hitler. The liberal academic Yrjö Hirn, usually known for his cautious public comments, also came out with a strong condemnation of German anti-semitic policy.[106] Those sympathetic to the National Socialist cause were in a clear minority. Among the most prominent of these were Tito Colliander, Bertel Gripenberg and Örnulf Tigerstedt.[107]

The new post-1933 German administration showed some interest in developing closer cultural relations with Finland to supplement and expand already existing links and put them on a more formal, institutionalised footing. The Nordische Gesellschaft association, which had been founded in the early 1920s and latterly become powerfully imbued with Nazi ideology, assumed a significant role in this effort to promote closer relations, introducing an annual Nordic Cultural Festival in Lübeck, to which participants from Finland were regularly invited. Scandinavian writers were also regular visitors at the special writers' retreat (Deutsche-Nordisches Schriftstellerhaus) set up in 1933 in Travemünde on the Baltic coast; among the various Finnish writers who stayed there from 1934 onwards were Tito Colliander, Lauri Viljanen, Göran Stenius and Olavi Paavolainen, the flow continuing even after the unfavourable publicity generated by the publication of the latter's critical *A guest of the Third Reich*.[108] Following the refusal of Hugo Suolahti, the Chancellor of Helsinki University, otherwise known for his sympathetic attitudes towards Germany, to accede to German overtures to act as an unofficial intermediary in the cultural and academic field, Germany turned to the writer V. A. Koskenniemi, who quickly became a prominent figure during the following years in promoting closer bilateral cultural relations.[109] Koskenniemi's decision to take up this challenge was influenced both by his overall positive feelings towards Germany, but also undoubtedly by his awareness of the significant personal role he would acquire as a result in shaping the pattern of the country's international cultural relations.

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106. *Nya Argus* 1.7.1933; Hbl 20.8.1938.
107. T. Colliander 1934, pp. 20—3, 50—2; Barck 1973 p. 68.
108. SKL:n ptk., 23.5., 2.6.1934, 18.5.1935; FSvF prot., 18.5.1934, 19.5.1935, 30.4.1936.
109. Information provided by Anto Leikola, 11.8.1981.

Koskenniemi made numerous visits to Germany over the years that followed, regularly participating in the Lübeck Cultural Festival and attending the notorious Nuremberg party rally held in the summer of 1936.[110] Koskenniemi's role in Finnish-German cultural relations was complemented by the lesser, but also important part played by the leading conservative literary doyenne, Maila Talvio.[111]

Increased cultural contacts were not restricted to the literary world alone, however, but also embraced the other arts, as well as the world of entertainment. A major exhibition of German art assembled by the Nordische Gesellschaft association and the Nationalsozialistische Kulturgemeinde, and including some 400 works by many of Germany's foremost artists, was staged in Helsinki in March 1936 and in Turku a little later. The works on show included a number of pieces by artists of the new Nazi school dedicated to celebrating the achievements of post-1933 Germany, achievements which were otherwise strongly to the fore in the overall tone of the exhibition's presentation. Two large, somewhat less ambitious surveys of Italian art were staged in 1937.[112] Germany was also active in marketing and promoting the products of the new German cinema in Finland during the 1930s. Despite their efforts, however, German studios were unable to seriously undermine the dominant hold on the Finnish film-going public which had been gained, through a combination of efficient marketing and close cooperation with local distributors, by American film producers during the previous decade.[113] Nevertheless, during the first half of the decade at least, German films were able to achieve a healthy second-place in screenings, but remained some way behind the American share, which ran as high at one point as two-thirds of total film imports before falling off to around half towards the latter half of the decade.[114] The increasing harnessing of the German cinema to serve ideological

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110. Hiedanniemi 1980, pp. 90—7.
111. Ibid., pp. 101, 124—6; Tuulio 1965, pp. 391—7, 403—7.
112. HS 8.3.1936; Hbl 8.3.1936; US 8.3.1936; AS 9.3., 1.4.1936. The exhibition of German painting entitled '100 years of German Art' was held 7.3.—29.3.1936, that of Italian landscape painting in January 1937, and that of work by Italian women artists 21.9.—10.10.1937.
113. Uusitalo 1972, pp. 31—2.
114. Elokuvamiehen Kalenteri 1944 pp. 214—5.

ends, however, created its own difficulties for those involved in marketing German films abroad and in Finland. The banning by the Finnish censor of screenings of 'Horst Wessel', for example, served to convince German distributors of the hopelessness of offering politically-coloured creations such as 'Hitlerjunge Quex' and Leni Riefenstahl's celebration of the 1934 Nuremburg rally, 'Triumf des Willens', for public showing in Finland; they were shown instead to invited audiences at the German Legation in Helsinki. Leni Riefenstahl's impressive documentary of the Berlin Olympics of 1936 was nevertheless allowed general distribution.[115] The popularity and influence of German popular music grew substantially during the 1930s. In the theatre world, in contrast, German influence fell off considerably as Paris began to replace Berlin as a centre of theatrical innovation and interest. Vienna and Prague also emerged as new centres of interest for Finnish directors and critics.[116]

Academic ties between Finland and Germany, which had traditionally been important, remained strongly in evidence. German influence was particularly prominent in the natural sciences, engineering and medicine, with the majority of research papers in these subjects published in Finnish academic journals for the international audience typically appearing in German, and only a few in English or French. Linguistic studies were also characterised by a concentration on Germanic-related subjects. Significantly less research was done on the Romance languages and even less on the relatively new subject for Finland of English studies. In the social sciences, contacts tended to be concentrated on Sweden and Britain and the rest of Western Europe. Sociological research continued to draw its main inspiration from the British school, as previously. Generally speaking, however, Germany continued to serve as the major link to the wider international academic and scientific community for Finnish researchers, and, as a by-product of this role, continued therefore to play a significant role in directing and shaping academic ideas and opinions in Finland.

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115. *Suomen Kinolehti* 1/1935, 2/1936, 1/1938; Aito Mäkinen 21.11.1981.
116. Kalima II 1968, pp. 303—5, 342—4, 373, 387—8.

Cultural links along the Finno-Ugrian axis with Estonia and Hungary continued to be well maintained. The fourth Finno-Ugrian congress held in Helsinki in 1931 was well attended, particularly by Finnish academics, and embraced an extensive series of lectures and discussions. Subsequent congresses were held in Tallinn in 1936 and Helsinki in 1939.[117] Contacts between student organisations in the three countries were also relatively close. Although the latter half of the decade witnessed something of a decline in the general level of ties compared with previous years, moves were made at governmental level to consolidate links, both in wider cultural terms and at the academic level. Various student exchange programmes and more comprehensive language teaching were introduced, for instance, following the signing in 1938 of Finnish-Estonian and Finnish-Hungarian cultural agreements.[118] A number of societies devoted to promoting relations with Estonia and Hungary were also set up on a less official basis throughout the decade by professional federations representing doctors, architects and teachers.[119]

Progress was also made in a number of fields in developing and deepening links between Finland and Sweden, although a number of language and politically-related difficulties continued to hamper relations. Finnish feelings of inferiority towards Sweden, together with parallel Swedish feelings of superiority towards Finland, had yet to be completely eliminated. Particular problems continued to be caused by linguistic issues. The ease with which the Swedish-speaking community was able to maintain links with mainland Sweden, together with the extent of these links, proved an inevitable source of tension between Finland's two linguistic communities. Disputes also continued between the two countries as to the real nature and magnitude of the language problem in Finland, and the status of the Swedish-speaking minority. The general course of international developments and domestic events

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117. Suomalais-ugrilaisen Kulttuuritoimikunnan suomalaisen osaston ptk. 29.3.1934; Paavo Siro 21.5.1980; Martti Ruutu 10.8.1981.
118. Suomalais-ugrilaisen Kulttuuritoimikunnan suomalaisen osaston ptk. 4.2.1937, 9.2.1938.
119. Suomalais-ugrilaisen Kulttuuritoimikunnan suomalaisen osaston ptk. 11.1.1937.

within Finland as the decade progressed nevertheless served to create an atmosphere increasingly favourably disposed towards closer links with Sweden and the rest of Scandinavia. Greater emphasis came to be put on both country's common historical inheritance and the similarities in cultural and social developments existing between the Scandinavian countries as a whole. These shared traditions were identified by liberal opinion as marking the region off from the totalitarianism of Central Europe, and serving to reinforce the essential unity of the Nordic area. While contacts with Germany were often very visible and thus attracted much public attention and comment, contacts with Scandinavia tended to assume a much lower profile, but were often much more extensive than surface impressions perhaps sometimes indicated.

The Finnish authorities were keen to see closer links with Sweden and to assist this a special committee was set up, with members drawn mainly from the academic world, to consider ways of improving the situation, particularly with regard to the Finnish-speaking community.[120] Efforts were also made by government to help restore official links between the Finnish Student Federation (SYL) and its Swedish sister organisation, which had broken down in 1928. Following this break, a parallel organisation of Swedish-speaking students (FSS), formed at the turn of the decade and pursuing its own independent approach, had virtually taken over maintaining student links with Scandinavia.[121] Moves to remedy the situation were, however, largely frustrated, not only by the strained relations existing between the Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking student bodies, but also by the strength of radical nationalist opinion current among Finnish-speaking student leaders and their resistance to allying the student community with what they saw as a dangerously socialist Scandinavia, as well as to cooperating with Cajander's centre-left government. Efforts by Kaarlo Linkola, the Rector of Helsinki University, to remove some of the obstacles to improving relations were also unsuccessful, leading amongst other

120. Helsingin yliopiston konsistorin ptk. 6.5.1936; Norden-yhdistyksen kirjelmä 23.4.1936 (HYA).
121. *Studentbladet* 1.12.1930, 4.12.1935, 16.4.1936; Harmo 1971, pp. 31—3, 56—7.

things to the abandonment of plans to hold a joint Scandinavian student conference, originally scheduled to be held in Helsinki, in 1939 and its move to Oslo.[122]

In terms of Finland's international contacts in the academic field, Scandinavia continued to serve as the area with which it proved easiest both to establish and maintain ties. Joint Nordic conferences in a wide variety of disciplines had become a regular feature of academic exchange within the region by the 1930s. Links between legal faculties in Finland and the other Scandinavian countries had always been active, a fact helped by the large number of Swedish-speaking legal scholars in Finland. Linguistic factors also contributed to the relative closeness of ties between Swedish-speaking historians in Finland and their colleagues in the rest of Scandinavia, compared with the paucity of those of Finnish-speaking historians, whose work largely appeared in Finnish and thus remained mainly little known outside Finland. The 1931 Scandinavian congress of historians held in Helsinki, which saw a special emphasis put on publicising the latest results of Finnish research and recent Finnish-language publications, marked one of the few serious attempts to break with this pattern.[123] A number of links existed between Finnish economists and those associated with the Stockholm school, prominent for its work on economic trends and the theoretical background of economic policy. With the exception of a few Swedish-speaking scholars, there was only a bare minimum of contact with Sweden, however, in the field of political science, with the result that much of the work of the likes of K. R. Brotherus and Yrjö Ruutu was little known in Sweden.[124]

The Scandinavian writers' congress held in Helsinki in May 1935, despite being marred by various displays of friction between the two Finnish and Swedish-language writers' federations, exacerbated by the tense atmosphere surrounding the language

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122. *Ylioppilaslehti* 26.10., 21.11.1935, 13.2.1937, 9.4., 3.12.1938; *Suomen Heimo* 10.4., 31.10., 15.12.1937. On the role of K. Linkola, see SvPr 19.10.1938. Klinge IV 1968, pp. 199—201; Harmo 1971, pp. 60—2.
123. Nordiska historikermötet i Helsingfors den 7—10 Juli 1931, pp. 10—56; Martti Kerkkonen 6.11.1981.
124. K. R. Brotherus, Yrjö Ruutu and Jussi Teljo all published exclusively in Finnish. See *Contemporary Political Science* 1950, p. 150.

question at the time, marked an important step forward in consolidating literary links between Finland and the rest of Scandinavia, at a time when Finland was generally moving closer towards the idea of a greater measure of Nordic cooperation.[125] Links were also developed between the Finnish and Swedish socialist movements through improved contacts between both countries' workers' education associations and through the activities of the jointly-run Geneva school, sponsored by the Scandinavian trade union movement and workers education associations, which ran courses on the work of the League of Nations and international issues.[126]

Contacts in the literary and artistic fields between Finland and Britain and France remained modest throughout the 1930s. In the case of Britain, the generally poor knowledge of English typical of the period, and which extended to the literary and academic communities, only served as a further brake on building up and maintaining personal contacts and keeping abreast of developments in Britain. It has been estimated that even by the end of the decade there were only as few as half a dozen professors at Helsinki University with a reasonable knowledge of English.[127] Many leading writers, such as Koskenniemi and Waltari, were largely unfamiliar with British and American literature, relying for what they did know mainly on translations.[128] Teaching of English in secondary schools remained minimal, with the subject usually being available only in the higher grades as an optional or voluntary subject, with the exception of a few Finnish-language girls schools, where it was taught from an earlier age, and three Swedish-language secondary schools in Helsinki, where English was taught as pupils' first foreign language. The number of students reading English at Helsinki University continued, as a result, to remain small. English was not taught at all at the new Finnish-language university in Turku.[129]

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125. FSvF styr. prot. 26.1., 2.3.1935; SKL:n johtokunnan ptk. 16.2.1935.
126. Työväen omaehtoisen sivistystyö, p. 182; Föreningen Nordisk Folkhögskola i Geneve. Verksamhetsberättelse 1935—38, pp. 28—9; *Työläisopiskelija* 6/1939.
127. Ole Reuter 21.4.1980.
128. Mika Waltari 12.1.1977; Vieno Koskenniemi 26.11.1979.
129. Ole Reuter 21.4.1980.

Academic contacts with Britain were restricted and concentrated in a few fields such as sociology, which had some tradition of links with British scholarship, and economics, in which new contacts were established by figures such as Bruno Suviranta and some of his younger colleagues interested in British work being produced on the dynamics of market forces and Keynsian theories.[130] In the humanities, the group of literary scholars focused around Professor Yrjö Hirn formed something of an exception to the general lack of familiarity with British work otherwise typical, but was too small to have any real influence on improving Finnish awareness of cultural developments in Britain. Very little interest was felt towards British drama within the Finnish theatre world; the head of the National Theatre in Helsinki, Eino Kalima, visited Britain for the first time only in 1935.[131] Also symptomatic of the low level of contact was the fact that no Finnish lectors taught at British universities. British Council scholarships only began to be taken up by Finns in the very last years of the decade. The major reason behind the very fragmentary nature of cultural and academic links between the two countries lay, in the Finnish case, in the general lack of interest in and knowledge of British culture and academic research, and in the dominance of cultural influence from elsewhere. This lack of interest in British and American culture, compared for example to that in German culture, was also reflected outside the cultural and academic worlds in the continuing lack of popularity of Rotary club activity, and in the upswing in hostility, typical of the latter half of the decade, towards Freemasonry, which was condemned on the Right for its cosmopolitan nature.

Despite the long tradition of Finnish interest in French culture, the level of actual contact between the two countries remained low during the 1930s. French influence was most evident in the visual arts, with French art continuing to have a significant impact, but even here the trend towards national themes was strong. Few writers, in contrast, had links with France. Theatrical interest nevertheless remained focused on the Parisian stage, the National

130. In addition to Bruno Suviranta, the economist Lauri O. af Heurlin also studied in London.
131. Tapiolinna 1946, p.7; Kalima II 1968, pp. 354—6.

Theatre in particular maintaining an active interest in French drama. The latter half of the decade also saw a significant increase in the number of French films screened in Finnish cinemas, the majority, historical pieces and comedies.[132]

A chair of Finno-Ugrian linguistics was set up in Paris in 1930, its first holder being Aurélieu Sauvageot, together with a lectorship to cover practical language instruction. The idea of a special office, known as Franco-Fennia, based in Paris and designed to promote and coordinate increased cultural exchange, proved short-lived, ultimately functioning for only a few years during the mid-1930s. Various exhibitions of work by leading Finnish artists were nevertheless held in Paris, and a number of visits made by Finnish choirs and other performers. Finland also took part in the 1937 Paris World Fair, the Finnish pavilion being designed by Alvar Aalto.[133] The scale of Finland's overall cultural profile in Paris, for all the relative importance attached within Finland to having some kind of presence, was nevertheless undeniably low, as perhaps was inevitable in a city so full of competing attractions. Within Finland, interest in things French tended to be concentrated more among the older generation than the young, and more within Swedish-speaking than Finnish-speaking circles, a fact clearly reflected in the membership and style of activities favoured by the Societé Franco-Finlandais. This largely upper-class association, which proved itself incapable of developing its programme to appeal to a wider section of society, nevertheless continued to fulfil a useful, if limited role in maintaining interest in French culture.

After the very modest movement made in the latter half of the 1920s towards some measure of cultural contact between Finland and the Soviet Union, the early years of the 1930s saw a virtual halt to any further progress. Within Finland, this deterioration owed its origins to the growing hostile mood towards developments in the Soviet Union, and the five-year plan policy and its negative effects on rural society, in particular; within the Soviet Union, to the continuing suspicion of the outside world and isolationism

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132. Elokuvamiehen Kalenteri 1944, p. 215.
133. Irja Spira 9.10.1981.

typical of Soviet society of the period. From about 1933 onwards, however, signs of a mild thaw in relations and some opening-up of cultural contacts began to be evident. This was reflected, for example, in an increase in Finnish interest in Soviet drama and the modern experimental theatre of the Soviet directors Tairov and Meyerhold. The work of the latter had particularly impressed the director Eino Salmelainen when he had had a chance to see it at first hand in Paris in 1931, and he was among a group of Finnish directors and actors which visited Moscow in the autumn of 1936 to sample the latest Soviet ideas.[134] The significance of this visit can be judged from the fact that contact had previously been restricted to individual trips made by actresses such as Elli Tompuri, who visited Moscow a number of times between 1933 and 1935.[135] This fledgling interest in Soviet drama failed, however, to embrace the Soviet cinema. Few Soviet films reached Finland during the 1930s, a handful at most being screened annually.[136]

While many of the classics of Russian literature continued to be popular, little was known of modern Soviet writing. What was known tended to be concentrated, not unsurprisingly, among left-wing literary circles and writers such as Elvi Sinervo and Jarno Pennanen, both members of the 'Kiila' group. The latter, a loose association of left-leaning modernist literary and intellectual figures, was founded in mid-decade, in reaction to what was seen as the growing reactionary atmosphere within Finland, to promote modern working class literature such as that being produced in Sweden and France, and to campaign against the spread of fascism.[137] The left-wing literary magazine *Kirjallisuuslehti* and, to a lesser extent, *Soihtu,* published by the Academic Socialist Society (ASS), also played their part in drawing Finnish readers' attention to Soviet literature.

There was very little contact between the two countries in the academic field, even in the area of Finno-Ugrian studies. Few permits for Finnish academics to do linguistic fieldwork across the border proved forthcoming from the Soviet authorities and those

134. Salmelainen 1955, pp. 111—2.
135. Maija Savutie 13.1.1982; Tompuri 1944, pp. 156—69.
136. Elokuvamiehen Kalenteri 1944, p. 215.
137. Palmgren 1977, pp. 1—6; Suomen Kirjallisuus VI, pp. 441—2.

that were, were typically only granted to scholars working with the more distant of the language groups, none being obtainable for those wanting to work in Soviet Karelia. Short trips to Leningrad and Moscow were nevertheless occasionally arranged. The strained relations existing between the two countries, which only deteriorated during the latter part of the decade in the wake of the publicity surrounding the Soviet purges, together with the strength of Finnish reaction to them, served to limit cultural exchange and prevent its expansion.

In terms of overall attitudes towards cultural questions within Finland, the latter half of the 1930s marked a gradual displacement of the intensely inward-looking nationalism which had dominated during much of the early period of independence. Conservative nationalist opinion, which had been so much in evident at the beginning of the decade, while remaining a potent force in shaping the face of Finnish cultural expression, was forced to loosen its hold as other strands of more liberal and cosmopolitan-inclined opinion began to make themselves felt. The country's successful recovery from the Mäntsälä incident and the threat of an outright right-wing takeover, in signalling the preservation of the established form of representative government, had provided an important sense of reassurance to a large section of society, and acted as an influential, if indirect source of optimism. The resulting rejuvenation and expansion of cultural activity and the arts in general which this development inspired, as it eventually filtered through, was paralleled by a general increase in interest in developments abroad, in Western Europe in particular, and in incorporating them into domestic work. Earlier insular and intolerant attitudes towards foreign ideas increasingly began to be replaced, as social stability increased, the threat of social tension receded and material well-being improved, by a more self-confident outlook, open to new ideas and approaches. This was typified in the work of the dynamic young generation of writers, poets and literary critics, including Mika Waltari, P. Mustapää, Olavi Paavolainen, Tatu Vaaskivi, Raoul Palmgren and Pentti Haanpää.

Foreign awareness of Finnish culture was influenced by a varying combination of factors, dependent on the fluctuating general level

of interest in Finland and Finnish affairs existing abroad, the problems caused by Finland's isolated linguistic position, and Finland's own enthusiasm for promoting Finnish culture abroad. The one hundredth anniversary of the first publication of the national epic, the Kalevala, one of the most visible symbols of Finnish culture abroad, falling in February 1935, presented an ideal opportunity for those involved in organising efforts to increase the extent of international familiarity with Finnish culture to focus interest on Finnish literature and folk poetry, as well as other aspects of the arts in Finland. A large number of foreign guests were invited to the festive celebrations in Helsinki, and Finnish legations in a number of foreign capitals organised small-scale local celebrations to mark the event.[138] Assistance was also provided for further translations of the epic to improve the work's accessibility for foreign audiences. New emphasis was given to folk poetry research, a field in which Finland already had a leading international reputation, and to disseminating information about the country's extensive and well-documented folk poetry traditions.

With the exception of the Finno-Ugrian congress held in Helsinki in 1939, no major academic gatherings were organised in Finland during the latter half of the 1930s. Visits by Finnish academics abroad appear to have mildly increased as a whole over the period, although the quantity of money available for scholarships remained largely at its previous level. Of the other international congresses of the period, the Scandinavian writers' congress, held in Helsinki in 1935, was without doubt the most prominent.

Although Swedish-language literature continued to be better known outside Finland than its Finnish-language counterpart, an increasing number of authors writing in Finnish, Sillanpää still very much at their head, managed to get their books translated.[139] In the theatrical field, the National Theatre visited Tallinn in Estonia twice during the decade, in 1931 and 1937, and also appeared at the Molière festival in Paris in mid-decade. The very localised nature of many of the themes which had been favoured

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138. US 1.3.1935; HS 28.2.1935; SS 28.2.1935.
139. Haltsonen-Puranen 1979.

by Finnish dramatists from the early days of Aleksis Kivi onwards, typically closely tied to Finnish history and the Finnish experience, severely hampered their transition to the international repertoire and their gaining easy acceptance abroad.[140] Nothing really changed during the 1930s to alter the fact that those aspects of Finnish culture not tied to language uniformly found it easiest to make a mark in the world. This had traditionally been the case with music, Sibelius becoming particularly popular in Britain although much less so in Germany, and was now reflected in the success of modern Finnish architecture, in the shape of the work of such figures as Alvar Aalto, in making an international name for itself. Here as elsewhere, however, international interest tended to be focused on particular individuals and their achievements, rather than Finnish culture as a whole, which continued to remain very much an unknown quantity for the international audience.

8. Developments in Finland's sporting links abroad

Compared to the Finnish teams competing at earlier Olympics, the size of the Finnish contingent at the Los Angeles Olympics in 1932 was particularly small, numbering only some 24 competitors. The distance involved in travelling to California and the financial stringencies imposed by the depression also affected the size of a number of other European national teams.

Popular interest in the fortunes of the Finnish team was overshadowed, however, by the disagreements surrounding the amateur status and eligibility of its most prominent member, Paavo Nurmi, who had been entered for the first time in the marathon. Nurmi's participation in the Games had been the focus of an international dispute, centred around accusations of his having broken the regulations covering his amateur status and received payments for competitions. A start on settling the case had been made in the autumn of 1931 through the efforts of the Swedish President of the International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF), J. Sigfrid Edström, together with a fellow Swedish sports

140. Information provided by David Barnett, 29.10.1981.

administrator, Bo Ekelund; both of these figures had been prominently active in ensuring strict observance of the code of conduct covering amateur competition in their native Sweden. The dispute surrounding Nurmi's amateur position and thereby his right to compete in further Olympics had quickly awoken a flurry of international attention and speculation, and had caused a wave of protest within Finland, much of it inspired by a sense of hurt national pride. Edström was singled out for particularly angry comment by Finnish critics of the case. Finnish anger was also directed more widely at Sweden as a whole, which was portrayed as a country consumed by envy of Finland's past sporting achievements and claim to sporting fame, envy which had pushed Sweden's sporting authorities to try and sabotage Finland's chances at the Los Angeles Olympics. Opinion on the issue was virtually united and equally strong across both Finnish and Swedish-speaking sporting communities, as well as amongst the public at large.[141]

The depth of the country's commitment to Nurmi and the Nurmi legend, and the importance attached to his part in consolidating Finland's place on the international sporting map, was well reflected in the attitude of the leadership of the Finnish Athletics Federation (SVUL), responsible for organising the Finnish team, towards the dispute over his amateur status. While undoubtedly aware of Nurmi's infringements of amateur rules, the Federation nevertheless put its full weight behind Nurmi's case.[142] The Finnish Federation called for the IAAF to provide substantiated proof of Nurmi's professional status before it would be willing to consider dropping him from the Finnish team, in the belief that acquiring such proof would be difficult, if not impossible. This tactic failed, however, to halt proceedings within the IAAF, which declared Nurmi a professional shortly prior to the Los Angeles Games, thereby effectively banning him from taking part.[143] Even despite Nurmi's absence and the small size of their team, however, Finnish athletes enjoyed considerable success in Los Angeles, paralleling that won by previous Finnish teams at earlier compe-

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141. *Idrottsbladet* 14.4., 1.8.1932.
142. Karikko-Koski 1975, pp. 224—40; Kekkonen 1981, pp. 239—46.
143. See Sigfrid Edström's letters of 6.5. and 20.5.1932 to Ernst Krogius (Edström collection/RA). Bo Ekelund 9.3.1981; Karikko-Koski 1975, pp. 226, 229—31.

titions. Finland was placed eighth overall in the final medal table. The new generation of Finnish runners convincingly proved themselves equal to the challenge of maintaining Finland's established dominance in long-distance track events.[144]

Nurmi's disqualification from amateur competition and the role played in that decision by Swedish sports officials had an important influence on the development of sporting links between Finland and Sweden. The strength of Finnish hostility towards what were seen as the Swedish-inspired moves against Nurmi was made plain as early as 1931 by Urho Kekkonen, president of the Finnish Sports Federation (SUL), during the closing ceremony of the fourth joint Swedish-Finnish Games, when he told his surprised Swedish colleagues that Finland would be withdrawing from all future annual joint games between the two countries.[145] Following the Los Angeles Games, Kekkonen went even further, advocating breaking off virtually all Finland's sporting ties with Sweden. In the autumn of 1932, the Federation was instrumental in refusing to sanction any Finnish participation in Swedish competitions.[146] Kekkonen made extensive efforts to get public opinion behind him on the issue, and was not afraid to use emotional language and appeals to national pride and patriotic values to advance his case, as is evident in the series of articles on the subject he wrote for *Helsingin Sanomat* during the autumn of 1932.[147]

It is difficult, all the same, to see what Kekkonen and his supporters really thought, or hoped could be gained by such an uncompromisingly hostile attitude towards Sweden. Part of the aim was undoubtedly purely retaliatory, to undermine Sweden's own international sporting links and put a question mark over Swedish sporting credibility and, in the longer term, to help push Swedish sporting opinion against the type of policies advocated by Edström. Bypassing Sweden altogether, Kekkonen and his supporters envisaged opening up a network of sporting links with

144. Nygrén-Siukonen 1978, p. 218.
145. Kekkonen 1981, pp. 236—9.
146. See the corespondence during the autumn of 1932 between the SUL and Svenska Fri-idrottsförbundent (Svenska Fri-idrottsförbundet archive E 1/RA).
147. HS 8.—10.9.1932; HS 31.8., 19.9.1932; *Suomen Urheilulehti* 1.8., 22.8.1932; US 29.9.1932.

the rest of Europe to allow Finnish sportsmen to take part in joint competitions and athletics meetings with sportsmen from countries such as Poland, Hungary, Germany and France. Although Kekkonen's policy received strong and vocal backing from a large section of the sporting community, some discordant voices were nevertheless heard. Prominent among these was that of the Swedish-language sports paper *Idrottsbladet,* backed by the Finland-Swedish Sports Federation (SFI). While broadly agreeing with the general criticism of Edström's role in the Nurmi affair, *Idrottsbladet* could not accept that it was necessary to break off sporting ties with Sweden in consequence. It described this as a retaliatory style of reaction influenced by wider nationalist, anti-Swedish sentiments, which had little or nothing to do with sport. To clear the air on the issue, it was suggested that both Kekkonen and Ekelund be replaced.[148] This and other criticism, however, had little immediate impact on the position adopted by the SUL over the issue. Kekkonen's approach was confirmed at a special Federation conference held in March 1933, and Nurmi allowed to continue competing in domestic amateur competitions.[149]

It was not until the spring of 1935 that more wide-ranging opposition to the Kekkonen-sponsored policy emerged, when the Swedish-language sports clubs, which had previously been identified with criticism of Kekkonen's uncompromising stance, were joined by a number of clubs from the larger towns, including Helsinki, in calling for a relaxation of the ban on competition with Sweden. This had become something of a financial burden for clubs wanting to organise international meetings, in forcing them to invite an increasing number of competitors from outside Scandinavia. Harald Nordblad, a leading light in Helsinki sporting circles, played a central role in unofficial negotiations with the Swedish Sports Federation in efforts to reactivate competition between the two countries.[150] The strength of this growing groundswell of opposition was reflected at the spring conference of the Finnish Federation in 1935 which, by a slim majority,

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148. *Idrottsbladet* 22.9., 6.10.1932.
149. *Suomen Urheilulehti* 27.3., 7.8.1933; *Idrottsbladet* 29.6., 20.7.1933.
150. See Harald Nordblad's memorandum of 26.4.1935 to Svenska Fri-idrottsförbundet and Bo Ekelund's reply of 2.5.1935 (Svenska Fri-idrottsförbundet archive).

decided to overturn the ban imposed on competition with Sweden and begin official discussions with the Swedish authorities on the normalisation of sporting relations. This decision was a clear blow to Kekkonen, who had continued to advocate a more cautious line to reopening ties, calling for a greater conciliatory effort on Sweden's part.[151] Although Kekkonen was nevertheless able to recover something of his position after successfully gaining a vote of confidence for his administrative committee at the Federation's conference held shortly afterwards in June, developments had already started to get under way, in the shape of the signing of a number of preliminary agreements covering the participation of various Swedish athletes in upcoming Finnish competitions.[152] Formal discussions aimed at restoring normal relations were also begun between the Finnish and Swedish Sports Federations, with an agreement being signed on 11 July. As well as freeing the Finnish Federation from a policy which had outgrown any usefulness it might once have been seen as having, this agreement also served to defuse Swedish resentment and provided a useful framework for developing future links. Joint competitions between the two countries were resumed, but residual difficulties saw to it that competitions at national team level were not restarted again until 1939.[153]

The level of Finnish sporting achievement in relation to the improving results being produced elsewhere became the subject of increasing concern among Finnish sporting authorities during the course of the lead-up to the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Up until the mid-1930s, Finland had enjoyed consistent and considerable success at the Olympics, a fact which had led to the development of an element of complacency regarding Finland's hold on a number of key events. The fact of the situation was, however, that over the intervening years extensive efforts had been made in a

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151. US 6.5.1935; *Suomen Urheilulehti* 6.5.1935; *Idrottsbladet* 9.5.1935; AS 6.5.1935.
152. US 17.6.1935. See also the memorandum from Svenska Fri-idrottsförbundet dated 6.7.1935 to the SUL (Svenska Fri-idrottsförbundet archive).
153. See Bo Lindman's telegram of 17.6.1935 and memorandum of 6.7.1935 to Lauri Pihkala. Also Kekkonen's letter of 26.7.1935 to Lindman (Svenska Fri-idrottsförbundet archive) and Lindman's letter of 28.4.1982 to the author.

number of countries, Germany being a particular example, to improve sporting performance and the level of competition. Compared to the run-up to previous Olympics, therefore, that to the 1936 Games was marked by a new caution among Finnish competitors and organisers. The final results of the Games, however, met with considerable satisfaction, a number of commentators being pleasantly surprised by the number of Finnish successes scored, which saw Finland ranked fifth overall in the final medal table. All the same, this did not prevent some of them from observing that a similar level of success was unlikely to be repeated in the future, and that Finland would probably have to accept a more modest level of achievement in international competition.

The Berlin Games were also the cause of wider, more general speculation outside the sporting community, as a result of their size and the Nazi movement's efforts to exploit the event for political and propaganda purposes. While *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Uusi Suomi* preferred to cover the event from a purely sporting point of view, restricting their other comments to such things as praising the Games' well-oiled organisation, *Ajan Suunta* on the Right, and *Sosialidemokraatti* on the Left, concentrated much more on the event's political repercussions and implications.[154] *Ajan Suunta* was particularly lavish in its praise of German athletes and the Games' organisers, and not shy to implicitly interpret Germany's sporting successes as a further positive consequence of the change which had taken in Germany's system of government. *Sosialidemokraatti,* in sharp contrast, was much more critical, drawing its readers' attention to the extent to which the Games had been manipulated to serve nationalist and propaganda ends.[155]

International developments had brought a number of problems for the expanding Workers' Athletic Union (TUL). The disappearance of independent socialist sports movements in Germany and Austria between 1933 and 1934 in the wake of the political

154. HS 11.8.1936; US 1.8.1936.
155. AS 10.8., 17.8.1936; SS 2.8.1936 and the paper's general coverage of the Games 8.8.—12.8.1936. Also Nygrén-Siukonen 1978, p. 232.

upheavals affecting those countries was a bitter blow to the international socialist sporting community. This loss was felt all the more keenly as both countries had played host to international workers' athletics competitions in 1925 (Frankfurt am Main) and 1931 (Vienna). In redirecting the thrust of its sporting links abroad, the TUL decided to concentrate its efforts on developing closer ties with parallel organisations in the Scandinavian countries, particularly the prominent Norwegian workers' sports federation, and with the Soviet Union, links with which had been in virtual abeyance since the dispute over participation in the Spartakiad competition in 1928. The Federation already enjoyed links with the Baltic countries and a number of Western European countries, such as Belgium.[156] Discussions were held with the Soviet Sports Federation in Moscow in January 1935, resulting in the signing of a framework agreement, under which joint skating and wrestling competitions were held the same winter, and an athletics competition the following summer.[157] After this initial burst of competition, however, sporting ties between the two countries again fell off, partly as a result of a shift in Soviet interest towards establishing new sporting links with Norway and Spain.[158] Closer contact was established with the TUL's Norwegian sister organisation, but this failed to generate any significant movement towards developing a more extensive pan-Scandinavian network of competition. The weakness of the Swedish workers' sports organisation did little to help the situation.[159]

While making a consistent effort to emphasise the Union's independent status, the leadership of the TUL tried to avoid open confrontation between itself and the non-socialist Finnish Athletics Federation (SVUL). This was reflected in the Union's decision to allow TUL representatives to take part in the work of a government-sponsored committee, established in 1935, to consider the possibility of setting up a single national sports federation, even though the idea of such a body evoked little real

156. Hentilä I 1982, pp. 392—4.
157. TUL:n liittotoimikunnan ptk., 14.1., 28.1.1935: Arvi Heiskanen 15.12.1980.
158. TUL:n liittotoimikunnan ptk., 4.2.1935; TUL 28.2.1935; Arvi Heiskanen 15.12.1980; Hentikä I 1982, pp. 417—8.
159. TUL:n liittotoimikunnan ptk., 11.3., 15.4., 13.5., 16.12.1935; Hentilä I 1982, p. 425.

enthusiasm within the organisation.[160] Friction continued to exist between the two federations, however. Although refusing to sign the declaration issued by the socialist and communist-controlled sporting internationals directed against the holding of the Olympics in Berlin, the TUL declined to take part in the activities of the Finnish Olympic Committee in selecting the Finnish national team for Berlin.[161] Attention within the organisation was instead concentrated on the third Workers' Olympics held in Antwerp in the summer of 1937, which acquired a particularly symbolic significance with the continued banning of socialist sports movements in a number of countries. It was also the first in which the Soviet Union competed. The success of the Finnish team in Antwerp was a natural source of satisfaction to the Union and *Sosialidemokraatti,* providing as it did something of a counter to the success at Berlin the previous year. This satisfaction was diluted, however, by the generally poor standard of organisation of the Antwerp Games, and by the minimal level of coverage given to them and the Finnish successes there in the majority of the non-socialist press.[162]

The polarisation of Finnish sport and the existence of two separate, ideologically-opposed sporting communities, although far from being unparalleled elsewhere, served by its very continuance to fuel old quarrels and create an element of unnecessary tension. Various voices had been heard from the early 1920s onwards in support of calls for burying old disputes and for a return to a single umbrella organisation. The position of the TUL with regard to reunification, however, was especially difficult. Originally formed out of the various clubs expelled from the then central sports federation, the TUL found itself quickly labelled as a divisive, uncompromising organisation, as a result of its refusal to welcome the various attempts by the SVUL leadership aimed at developing closer links between the two organisations. The Union's position was not improved by the defection from its ranks during the 1920s and early 1930s of a number of top athletics, boxing, wrestling and football stars to the rival SVUL.

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160. TUL:n liittotoimikunnan ptk., 9.1.1935.
161. TUL:n liittotoimikunnan ptk., 15.4., 16.9.1935.
162. Nygrén 1968, pp. 98—9; Hentilä I 1982, pp. 421—2; TUL 3.8.1937; SS 5.8.1937.

The latter half of the 1930s, however, presented both federations with a new challenge and a significantly greater incentive for pooling their resources, following the decision by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in the summer of 1938 to abandon its plans to hold the 1940 Olympics in Japan, in the wake of the Japanese assault on China begun the previous year. With the blessing of J. S. Edström, the vice-president of the IOC, keen to finally eliminate the tensions still colouring sporting links between Finland and Sweden, they were instead offered to Finland.[163] A particular factor serving to concentrate minds on improving cooperation between the two federations, following Finland's acceptance of the IOC offer, was the need to ensure that Finland was able to field her best possible team to defend the country's sporting record on her home ground.

Although still overshadowed by past animosity, the efforts of the two organisations to come to some form of workable compromise were made easier by the shift which had been signalled by the forming of Cajander's centre-left coalition in 1937. Unlike previous administrations which had typically unashamedly favoured the SVUL, Cajander's tended to take a more neutral stance on sporting issues. A draft agreement covering future cooperation between the two federations emerged from a series of joint discussions held during 1938. Despite the increasingly positive attitude towards closer inter-federation cooperation which had been evident in the socialist press, many of the TUL's individual member clubs remained cautious towards the idea, pointing to the difficulties encountered by many of them at the beginning of the decade, the traditionally poor levels of government assistance they had enjoyed, and the history of hostility towards socialist-organised sporting activities typical of the rest of the sporting community.[164] The strength of this mood resulted in the rejection of the proposal by a slim majority at an extraordinary general meeting of the Union held in February 1939. Alarmed at this development, Väinö Tanner, the Social Democrat leader, intervened in the issue. The latter's arguments, stressing the political importance of a positive vote, finally convinced enough represent-

163. Nygrén-Siukonen 1978, pp. 235—6; HS 15.7., 16.7., 17.7.1938.
164. Hentilä I 1982, pp. 472—3; Vilho Lehtonen 5.3.1982; SS 16.7.1938.

atives at the meeting to secure the proposal's final acceptance, albeit in something of a watered-down form. This covered cooperation on a more limited scale than initially proposed, and was essentially restricted to the upcoming Olympics and future international and inter-federation competitions, but excluded smaller events staged at the club level.[165]

The TUL-approved outline agreement came up for discussion by the Finnish Athletics Federation in April, and awoke some bitter argument within the organisation. Acceptance of the agreement, even in its reduced form, was advocated by a group led by J. W. Rangell and Urho Kekkonen, both of whom argued that it would allow Finnish sport to present a united face to the world and simplify Finnish participation in international competitions and, more specifically, ease the organisation of the Helsinki Olympics. Those opposed to the agreement, such as K. E. Levälahti and Toivo Aro, concentrated instead on the need to defend the SVUL's role in managing Finland's international sporting links, which they were reluctant to sacrifice or share with the TUL. The proposal's opponents won the vote on the issue, which put a temporary halt to any further progress on the question.[166] The issue refused to go away, however. The SVUL decision provoked a wave of critical comment, both at home and abroad. Rather than the TUL, which had typically been identified previously as the major obstacle to improved sporting conditions within Finland, it was now the SVUL which was subjected to attack.[167] Government pressure and the threat of the loss of official financial assistance forced a rapid reassessment of the decision, resulting in the drafting of a new agreement, approved by both bodies at the end of April. In a last-ditch move, the SVUL leadership was nevertheless able to restrict it solely to cooperation covering preparations for the 1940 Olympics.[168]

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165. Hentilä I 1982, pp. 474—6; TUL 7.2., 14.2.1939.
166. SVUL:n ylim. kokouksen ptk., 15.4.1939 (SVUL archive); *Suomen Urheilulehti* 17.4.1939.
167. StT 20.4.1939; HS 22.4.1939.
168. SVUL:n liittohallituksen kokouksen ptk., 21.4.1939 (SVUL archive); *Suomen Urheilulehti* 24.4.1939.

Throughout the 1930s, sport continued to maintain the exceptionally pronounced role in the public imagination which it had acquired during the previous decade. There was a great sense of national pride in the achievements of Finnish sportsmen in international competitions, as well as widespread recognition of the role they played in improving international awareness of Finland. Interest in sport also indirectly served, in a modest way, to broaden popular attitudes to world affairs within Finland. International sporting competitions, besides contributing to strengthening a sense of national identity and opening up wider international perspectives, also nevertheless served to engender and reinforce some less welcome aspects of nationalist sentiment, such as the jingoist outbursts which accompanied the Finnish-Swedish athletics games held in the summer of 1939 in Stockholm and Helsinki.

VIII Finland's Future in the Balance — The Spring and Summer of 1939

The period following the Munich agreement signed in the autumn of 1938 saw the scale of the growth of German military and political strength in Europe increasingly and more widely appreciated within Finland, particularly on the Right. Munich came to be seen within conservative opinion as potentially marking the beginning of a new period of stability and peaceful development for Europe.[1] Scepticism towards the Western powers, which were seen as having effectively capitulated to Hitler at Munich, also gained ground within moderate and socialist opinion, which had previously been favourably disposed towards the West. Within government circles, the major impact of the Munich agreement, when set against the secret discussions held with Yartsev, was to strengthen the administration's resolve to continue developing Finland's links with Scandinavia. These, it was hoped, would insulate the country from potentially dangerous developments in the rest of Europe and provide it with an increased measure of security against any possible Soviet moves. Hopes were also high that implementation of the plans for the fortification of the Åland Islands could be accelerated.

Attitudes towards the Soviet Union were changing, as the belief in the latter's increasing isolation and limited potential to exert its

1. Uola 1982, pp. 77—8; IKL 5/1938, 6—7/1938, 8—9/1938, 10/1938; *Ajan Suunta* 8.10., 9.10.1938.

influence in shaping international developments steadily gained ground in various parts of Europe, and within certain sections of Finnish opinion. The extent of this latter development was indirectly reflected in the shift which took place in the Soviet stance towards Finland at the beginning of 1939, during the course of secret discussions held with the Finnish authorities. During these, the Soviet Union adopted a new set of less ambitious proposals, thought more likely to be acceptable to the Finnish side and of having a chance of reducing the growing attraction felt in Finland towards closer Scandinavian links and a Nordic style of neutrality.[2]

Germany's occupation of what was left of Czechoslovakia in mid-March 1939 marked a further step in German expansion and an increased challenge to the international community. In occupying Czechoslovakia, German aggrandizement had reached a point beyond which further territorial expansion could no longer be credibly justified on the basis of recovering Germany's natural national and ethnic borders. Further demands would have to be made on the basis of purely regional political arguments and the need for adequate 'Lebensraum' for the German state. The question of whether Germany could be stopped from making such further territorial demands on her neighbours, and what the long-term fate of those states in the German sphere of influence would be, inevitably became the subject of increasing international concern. Within Finland, the German occupation of Czechoslovakia triggered a substantial decline in pro-German sympathy on the Right, where it had traditionally been strongest. Although evident within the ranks of the National Coalition Party, this development was perhaps most clearly reflected in the change of fortunes experienced by the People's Patriotic Movement, the political grouping most clearly identified in the public mind with pro-German sentiments. The parliamentary elections held in July 1939 witnessed a halving of the party's number of seats, from 14 to 8. The arrival of a number of anti-Nazi refugees from the Sudetenland and German Jews in Finland, which had begun the previous autumn, bringing with them the first real contact much of the Finnish population had had with the realities of the Nazi system

2. Mylly II 1983, pp. 205, 207.

and the impact of German expansion in Central Europe, also no doubt contributed in part to this shift in mood. Prior to this, the flow of refugees to Scandinavia, which had been growing since 1933, had not affected Finland, and it was only now that various aid organisations to coordinate refugee assistance were set up in Finland, by the labour movement in particular.[3]

The German occupation of Czechoslovakia caused widespread concern and unease throughout the Western community, as well as in the Soviet Union. The position of Chamberlain, who had played such a central part in arranging the Munich agreement and who, after its signing, had expressed his satisfaction that it would secure what he had liked to call 'peace in our time', was particularly highlighted. Convinced now of the ineffectiveness of trying to hold Germany in check by direct agreements, Chamberlain introduced a new British foreign policy initiative, which resulted in guarantees being given to Poland and Rumania in March 1939, covering their territorial integrity. Later the same spring, Britain, together with France, began preparations for discussions aimed at negotiating an alliance agreement with the Soviet Union to contain possible future German expansion.

The effects of the German move also made themselves felt in Soviet policy thinking, which had been under review from the time of the Austrian Anschluss onwards, a fact also indicated by the timing of the Yartsev proposals put to Finland. The sense of deepening isolation felt by the Soviet leadership in the wake of the initial Munich agreement had only accelerated this reassessment of the Soviet Union's foreign policy and network of international relations. As faith evaporated in the notion of collective security and in the potential of the League of Nations as a tool for resolving security issues, so Soviet attention became increasingly refocused on a regionally-based security strategy as a means of guaranteeing the Soviet Union's borders. This shift saw a renewal of Soviet interest in the countries along its western border seen as posing security problems, Poland, the Baltic republics and Finland.

This increased Soviet focus on national security issues, and the resurgence of Russian nationalist sentiment it brought with it, was also reflected in an upswing in political suspicion directed to-

3. Torvinen 1984, pp. 127—33; Edgard Hegenbart 18.11.1982.

wards minority nationalities living close to the Soviet Union's western border, and in the forced removal in 1938 of Finnish-speaking population groups living in East Karelia to areas further eastward. The popular front policy was also abandoned and the powerful role previously given to Comintern substantially reduced. Linked to the latter was the decision taken in the late autumn of 1938 to close the Moscow-based Finnish section of Comintern. Increased suspicion also grew towards the various emigré communists living in the Soviet Union. Among these, the Polish and Finnish communist communities, both identified with sensitive areas along the western border, were subject to particular scrutiny and their members purged of what were seen as unreliable elements.

These latter developments had a debilitating effect on the already difficult position of the underground communist movement operating within Finland, which was further hampered by the imprisonment of a number of its leading figures in Helsinki at the end of 1938. Efforts to revive the movement's independent underground activities also received short shrift from Arvo Tuominen, who had moved from Moscow to Stockholm at the end of 1937 to act as a secret contact for the Finnish movement. This weakening of the movement was paralleled by a decline in the fortunes of various radical socialist groupings close to the party, such as the Academic Socialist Society (ASS).[4] Further towards the political centre, the Social Democrats' star was still very much in the ascendant. The parliamentary elections of July 1939 confirmed the party's position alongside the Agrarians in the Cajander administration; both parties' share of seats showed a modest rise, against losses by the opposition conservatives and the Swedish People's Party.

The British continued to show a very limited degree of interest at governmental level in Finland and Finnish affairs, a logical consequence of the fact that Britain possessed few direct interests

4. On the background to Arvo Tuominen's position after arriving in Sweden some time at the end of 1937, see Aili Mäkinen 20.1.1971, Toivo Karvonen 4.10.1979, Irja Strand 23.11.1979. For the reaction of the Swedish authorities to Tuominen's request for asylum made in May 1938, see the report on his case dated 1.6.1938 produced by Rikspolisstyrelsen, Säkerhetsavdelningen.

in the area. There was similarly little coverage of Finland in the major British newspapers of the time, with the presidential election of 1937 and the forming of Cajander's centre-left coalition, for example, referred to only very briefly. Some effort was made nevertheless to maintain at least a measure of contact, a fact reflected in the visit to Helsinki made by the British Assistant Secretary of State, on a tour of the Baltic, in the early summer of 1937 to discuss Anglo-Finnish trade relations and establish links with the new administration and, more generally, to gauge the situation in the Baltic area as a whole. Britain's overall concern was for continued stability in the Baltic. The emergence of Finnish and, to a lesser extent, Swedish interest in fortifying the Åland Islands was seen in London as a particularly dangerous development introducing fresh tension into the region, and as likely to significantly worsen both countries' relations with the Soviet Union, unless the latter was not also brought into talks on the issue. Finland's relations with Germany were also a source of anxiety for Britain and were the object of particular interest on the part of British diplomats in Helsinki from 1936 onwards, as part of the Foreign Office's overall attempt to map the growing spread of German influence in Europe.[5]

From the German standpoint, Sweden represented the main focus of interest in the Nordic area, above all because of the German desire to maintain continuity of supplies of Swedish iron ore to German heavy industry. Compared to her western neighbour, Finland was very much of secondary interest to Germany, although her role as a protective barrier against the Soviet Union for the rest of Scandinavia was recognised. Fearing possible future Soviet moves to secure a role for the Soviet Union in the Åland Islands area, Germany was keen to see the Islands remain firmly in Finnish hands, and therefore saw no reason to oppose closer cooperation between Finland and Sweden over their defence. The composition of the Cajander government, however, drawing as it

5. See the report of the British envoy in Helsinki dated 25.1.1938 sent to the Foreign Office and the memorandum sent by the latter to the British Legation in Helsinki dated 28.2.1938 (FO 371/22265). Also Annual Report for Finland for 1937 (FO 371/22270) and Annual Report, economic for 1938 (FO 371/23642). Also see the general coverage given by the British Legation during 1937 and 1938 to Finland's foreign trade relations (FO 371/22265).

did on parties with minimal sympathies with Germany, served to limit the degree of influence open to Germany on Finnish decision-making. Those in Berlin were also well aware that pro-German circles within Finland, although prominent in participating in cultural exchange between the two countries, such as the Lübeck Nordic Festival, did not represent a politically influential body of opinion.[6]

The continuing German interest in not seeing Finland move any closer to the Soviet Union was also paralleled by a desire to prevent the development of closer Finnish links with the Western powers. A particular focus of German annoyance was Cajander's anglophile Foreign Minister, Rudolf Holsti, who the Germans were keen to see replaced, as in fact finally happened.[7] The German move taken in May 1939, proposing non-aggression treaties to all four Scandinavian countries, Finland included, together with Estonia and Latvia, was undoubtedly influenced by the fact that shortly previously, in March of the same year, Britain had given security guarantees to Poland and Rumania. Germany clearly hoped that, if the Scandinavian and Baltic countries could be persuaded to accept, they would also be indirectly agreeing to reject any possible subsequent British offer of a regional security guarantee arrangement, thereby securing Germany's northern flank.

Sweden had traditionally been suspicious of Finnish foreign policy and from the mid-1930s onwards this suspicion increasingly concentrated on the possibility of Finland's moving towards a more pro-German foreign policy. Drawing Finland closer into the Nordic orbit and into a closer relationship with Sweden in particular, therefore, was seen as a logical means of preventing this. The problem for Sweden, however, was how far it was possible to go in developing foreign policy and military links between the two countries without undermining Sweden's other security concerns. This remained an unresolved issue and was never tested at the time of the Czechoslovak crisis. Overall Swedish attitudes towards Finland continued, as a result, to be

6. Blücher: Tagebuch 13.1., 31.1., 13.2., 16.12., 22.2.1939. Also information provided by Martti Julkunen.
7. T. Soikkanen 1983, pp. 233—8.

quite deeply divided throughout this period and through the course of the various discussions held with Finland on defence questions. Resistance to Sweden committing herself to any binding agreement with Finland remained widespread.

From the Soviet standpoint, the Finnish position, caught between Germany and Scandinavia, appeared an uneasy compromise. As Soviet suspicions of Germany's ultimate foreign policy intentions in the Baltic and Scandinavia deepened, so the Soviet leadership grew increasingly distrustful of the Scandinavian countries' foreign policies. The idea of a united Nordic bloc had little to recommend it in Soviet eyes and aroused a variety of Soviet misgivings, most particularly on the question of the potential of a united Scandinavia, in the event of an international crisis, to pursue joint policies without succumbing to German interference. An increasingly integrated Scandinavian bloc was also seen as potentially posing an hindrance to the Soviet Union's own policies. Soviet thinking was, in any case, essentially sceptical of all forms of neutrality wherever they appeared, but particularly when it raised its head in states bordering on the Soviet Union itself. In terms of its military thinking regarding defence in the Baltic area during 1938 and 1939, the Soviet Union fell back on many of the ideas typical of pre-revolutionary defence planning, a development particularly highlighted in the resurgence of the 'portcullis' system idea for the defence of the Gulf of Finland and Leningrad.[8] To be effective, this system, based on a single defensive zone embracing the Baltic republics and the southern Finnish coastal area, required military bases in the countries concerned.

The inevitably significantly less important place played by the Baltic area in Western interests, when compared to those of the Soviet Union, became clear during discussions held between the latter and the Western powers on a possible joint alliance agreement during the late summer of 1939. This was particularly evident in the case of France. French thinking, reduced to its essentials, focused on two major aims: preventing war altogether, or, if that proved impossible, ensuring that any conflict took place as far away from French territory as possible and preferably

8. Paasivirta 1969, p. 23.

remained limited to a Soviet-German confrontation. Concentrating on these overall aims, little room was left in French planning for such things as the question of Baltic security, raised by the Soviet government at the talks, and the need, in the Soviet view, of guaranteeing the stability of the countries along the Soviet Union's north-western border. British policy similarly tended to be more concerned with securing British interests and influence further south. Britain's aim in giving security guarantees to Poland and Rumania, and subsequently to Greece and Turkey, was to create a durable and reliable barrier, and one which could be strengthened by closer cooperation between the countries in question, against continuing German expansion in Eastern Europe.

Although there was some Soviet recognition of the value of Britain's attempt, through her network of security guarantees, to put a brake on German expansion in Eastern and Central Europe, it was nevertheless assumed in Moscow that, if this policy were to fail, there would be little to prevent a major war in the East involving the Soviet Union as a principal combatant. This view would appear to have been further reinforced in the minds of Soviet thinkers when Western military specialists were brought into the talks on a possible East-West alliance. If, on the other hand, the British-inspired policy proved successful in putting a halt to German aggrandizement, it would also have every chance, so it was thought in Moscow, of bringing Britain significant political and commercial benefits in Eastern Europe, in much the same way that Britain had managed to strengthen her position and influence in the Middle East during 1937 and 1938.

Stalin's foreign policy ideas, as they developed during 1939, came increasingly close, in terms of their order of priorities and aims, with those current in the pre-revolutionary period. Stalin's ultimate concern, as that of the autocracy had been, was to secure Russia's position as a great power. Set against this background, Britain's guarantees to Poland and Rumania came to be seen mainly in terms of the restrictions they imposed on the extent of the Soviet Union's own sphere of influence and potential to exercise its power. It was only to be expected then that the various Soviet demands put forward from May 1939 onwards for the Soviet Union's right to serve as security guarantor for the Baltic states and Finland, and for its need to be able to defend its interests against what was termed 'indirect aggression' in the shape of

untoward shifts in Germany's favour in the internal balance of power in the region, became the cause of increasingly intractable differences of opinion between Britain and the Soviet Union.

It was at this stage that Stalin began to consider the possibility of an alternative agreement, not with the West, but with Germany. Contact was established between Soviet and German negotiators in the early summer of 1939. Extra room for manoeuvre and for a change of policy of this type had been provided shortly previously in May by the replacement of Litvinov with Molotov as Foreign Minister. By August, it became clear that an agreement was possible with Germany which, in terms of guaranteeing the Soviet Union's great power interests, appeared much more attractive than what had been outlined in the discussions held with Britain and France. A direct agreement with Germany also appeared to offer a better possibility than one with the Western powers, of postponing any future conflict, as well as providing the Soviet Union with the potential opportunity to gain territorial improvements along its western border.

The resurgence of traditional great power politics in the forging of the Munich agreement and subsequent developments, and which saw the small states of Europe, Finland included, increasingly bypassed or simply ignored in decision-making on major political questions in Europe, played a significant part in refocusing interest within Finland on defence and security questions and the need to improve the country's defence capability. Following approval of the 1938 procurement programme, discussion in the Defence Council and the government soon moved to a number of new separate defence projects. Attempts were also made to speed up the re-equipment programme, with a large loan being negotiated with Sweden in March 1939. One very visible sign of the new interest in defence issues were the fortifications, backed by the Civil Guard and the AKS, begun on the Karelian Isthmus in the spring of 1939 and designed to deter possible military incursions by the Soviet Union.

Defence planning, as well as the country's overall international position, received a major setback, however, after Molotov, the new Soviet Foreign Minister, made plain the Soviet Union's opposition to the joint Finnish and Swedish plans for fortifying the Åland Islands on 31 May. This saw the Swedish government

withdraw the bill it had put before Parliament covering Swedish participation in the Stockholm plan. The continuance in office of Richard Sandler as Swedish Foreign Minister nevertheless served to prevent the Finnish authorities from abandoning all hopes of achieving some form of closer relationship between the two countries. In reality, however, events were leading Finland into an increasingly isolated and exposed position, a fact which served to deepen the growing sense of insecurity which began to develop among the country's political leaders as their traditional points of reference disappeared. Efforts to find a way out of this growing impasse tended to be frustrated nevertheless by the inability of those in charge of foreign policy-making to develop a new policy strategy unhampered by the narrow, uncompromising and inflexible approach to national security which had come to dominate thinking in the field, and which failed to give adequate weight to the wider security aspects of the Finnish area and the northern Baltic as a whole. Above all, there was no real movement in reassessing Finland's relations with the Soviet Union, which remained bedevilled by the traditional sense of suspicion over the nature of the Soviet Union's ultimate political and ideological intentions towards Finland, which had afflicted them for much of independence.

Despite the worsening international situation and the country's increasingly precarious position, Finnish society and public opinion as a whole remained, if not unaware of, then largely unaffected by these developments. The general mood was one of optimism and confidence about the future, rooted in a belief that peace would somehow be preserved in spite of everything. The overall standard of living was probably higher than it had been at any time previously, and developments, when viewed from a purely domestic viewpoint, gave every indication of this upward swing continuing. Unemployment was low and social and economic reform progressing apace. The atmosphere generated by the preparations for the Helsinki Olympics planned for 1940 also played its part in reinforcing this sense of optimism.

The storm clouds gathering on the European horizon could not be ignored indefinitely, however. While the international crises of 1938 had seemed distant and unconnected with Finland, the shadow of increasing great power tension increasingly fell over

Finland as 1939 progressed. It gradually began to be more widely appreciated that, despite having been able in the past to avoid involvement in many European disputes and despite her geographical location isolated, Finland might ultimately be unable to avoid becoming drawn into wider European developments.

This growing awareness of the worsening situation, both in Europe as a whole and more directly in the Baltic area, was most obvious within political circles. Opinions as to the gravity of the situation and to the possibility of its deteriorating to such an extent as to lead to the start of a major war, however, continued to vary. Speaking to the British envoy in Helsinki in June 1939, Mannerheim expressed the view that, of the potential great power alliance alternatives then existing, Finland would find it easiest to come to terms with an alliance linking the Western powers and the Soviet Union. In his role as chairman of the Defence Council, Mannerheim presented the government in July 1939 with a new and expanded defence equipment procurement plan, with a budget rising to over a 1,000 million marks and based mainly on arms purchases from Sweden, to improve the country's defence capability to a level which he considered adequate to resist any serious attack. This called for expanding the fully-mobilised size of the army to thirteen divisions, instead of the previous figure of nine.[9] The major military exercises held on the Karelian Isthmus at the beginning of August appear to have only confirmed Mannerheim's fears concerning the inadequacies of the defence forces, as they revealed numerous weaknesses in the army's operational command structure, overall organisation and logistics.

The importance of maintaining national unity at a time of deepening international tension, and expanding on the positive development which had taken place towards eliminating internal social tensions over the previous two decades, was increasingly stressed in political comments over the course of the late summer. Typical of these was the speech made by Prime Minister Cajander on 12 August, in which he also underlined the need to accommodate the increased requirements of the armed forces

9. See the report of the British envoy in Helsinki to the Foreign Office dated 20.6.1939 (Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919—1939; Series 3, Vol. VI, pp. 120—1). Also Seppälä 1974, p. 83.

within overall government spending.[10] The increasingly and unprecedentedly dangerous level of tension in Europe, and the possibility of war it contained, were highlighted in a speech made shortly after Cajander's by the Social Democrat Minister of Finance, Väinö Tanner, who had previously tended to argue that there was little real danger of any country seriously contemplating starting another war in Europe. Tanner showed no enthusiasm for the great power guarantees proposed for the smaller states of Europe as discussed at the talks between Britain, France and the Soviet Union, preferring to see Finland unrestricted by any agreements not of her own making. On the question of the proposed fortification of the Åland Islands, however, he counselled caution, arguing that without sufficient care the question could cause unnecessary difficulties with the Soviet Union. Agreeing the necessity of strengthening the armed forces, he nevertheless also argued that defence spending should be kept within what he termed 'reasonable' bounds.[11]

Both Cajander's and Tanner's speeches concentrated on the importance of internal domestic unity and the government's commitment to strengthening the country's armed forces, comments on the latter point being directly addressed to the defence establishment, unhappy at the government's rejection of a number of its requests for increased defence spending. Taking a somewhat different and more openly optimistic tack, and one more obviously designed to calm public disquiet, the Foreign Minister, Eljas Erkko, speaking shortly after Cajander and Tanner, suggested that, despite the undeniably high level of tension in Europe, there were also increasing indications that peace would be preserved. Pointing to the discussions then under way between the Western powers and the Soviet Union, Erkko saw the possibility of the establishment of a new balance of power, and one favourable to the small nations of Europe, as relatively feasible. Erkko appears, however, to have conceded that little in the way of positive change could be hoped for in reducing Soviet-German hostility. Erkko looked to Britain to provide some form of security

10. See Cajander's speech made on 12.8.1939 and reported in HS on 13.8.1939.
11. See Tanner's speech made on 13.8.1939 and reported in SS on 14.8.1939.

back-up for Finland, although not in the form of any security guarantee agreement with the Soviet Union.[12]

A major new and unsettling factor was brought into the international equation, however, with the news that the Soviet Union and Germany, despite their many differences and historic opposition, had signed a non-aggression pact on 23 August. This agreement, and the unpublished secret accords assumed possibly to have been appended to it, forced politicians across Europe to enter on a radical reassessment of their policy strategies. Most particularly, the agreement came as a blow to Britain and France, one for which they had been largely unprepared.

It was hoped in Berlin that, through the pact with the Soviet Union, Germany would be able to avoid war with Poland and, in the event of a war in Europe, avoid the prospect of finding herself faced with enemies on two fronts. From the Soviet viewpoint, the pact eliminated any immediate danger of the Soviet Union being drawn into a European war, but, beyond that, it remained to be seen whether the Soviet Union would be able to exploit this breathing-space by extending its sphere of influence or national borders. Various information on the secret protocol attached to the treaty soon began to leak out. This only added to the fears, which had been growing within Finland since the announcement of the pact, that Finland too had been included as part of the bargain arrived at in Moscow. These fears were well-founded, as it was subsequently revealed that, on the basis of the division of spheres of influence agreed between the two powers, the Baltic republics, including Finland, together with parts of eastern Poland and Bessarabia, had been declared as lying within the Soviet sphere of influence, and western Poland within the German sphere.[13] The signing of the pact left the Polish leadership with few illusions about the precariousness of their country's position, a fact which only hastened their readiness to sign a treaty of assistance with Britain on 25 August, two short days after publication of the Soviet-German agreement.

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12. See Erkko's speech made on 19.8.1939 and reported in HS and SS on 22.8.1939.
13. See Die Beziehungen zwischen Deutschland und die Sowjetunion 1939—1941, pp. 89—91.

For many in Finland, a large question mark appeared to hang over the country's future in the wake of the non-aggression treaty. The reality of Finland's increasing isolation, particularly accentuated following Sweden's unwillingness to commit herself to any form of joint defence agreement and her reassertion of her traditional neutral position, could no longer be ignored. The attitude of the Finnish press to developments was one of increasing disbelief, bewilderment and uncertainty. Two questions dominated discussion, the possibility of a new world war and Finland's potential part in it. Attitudes towards Germany were particularly fraught, across the whole spectrum of the press. *Uusi Suomi,* with its background of pro-German sympathies, argued that Germany had not made any concessions to the Soviet Union affecting Finland, while *Ajan Suunta* saw the new situation as merely meaning that small states like Finland would now have to take a greater measure of initiative in securing their interests. *Sosialidemokraatti* saw the agreement in a less favourable light, as only boding ill for the small nations of Europe.[14] As a whole, overall reaction to the Soviet-German non-aggression pact saw the position of the political centre strengthened and that of both the extreme Right and the radical Left commensurately weakened. Within government circles, the view gradually gained ground in the wake of the pact that Europe was probably inevitably heading for war.

The German attack on Poland on September 1, followed by the declaration of war on Germany by the Western powers, although marking the beginning of a conflict which had been predicted as inevitable for some time, came as a major blow to governments across Europe. The Second World War had been set in motion.

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14. US 23.8.1939; SS 23.8.1939; AS 23.8.1939.

Sources

Studies of Finland's international relations and foreign policy over the period covered by this survey have been concentrated on two main areas, the years surrounding the gaining of independence (as for example Pakaslahti 1933,1934; Paasivirta 1947, 1949, 1957, 1961; Nurmio 1957; Lauerma 1966; Polvinen 1967, 1971; Apunen 1968; Zetterberg 1977; Upton 1980, 1981) and the latter half of the 1930s (for ex. Jakobson 1955; Suomi 1973; Mylly 1983; T. Soikkanen 1983). One consequence of this has been that the years falling outside these two main periods, together with the events and developments associated with them, have remained less well researched and, in a few areas, virtually untouched by scholarship.

On the question of foreign powers' policies and attitudes towards Finland, those of the Soviet Union have received the most comprehensive coverage (K. Korhonen 1966,1971). Study of Swedish attitudes has tended to be focused on specific periods, rather than the period as a whole (Wahlbäck 1968A; Kalela 1971; Selén 1974), as has that on German policies (Ilvessalo 1959; Julkunen unpubl.). The Åland Islands issue has attracted interest in a variety of disciplines, both in Finland and abroad. Finland's foreign and security policy has also been studied as a matter of party political debate and discussion (Mylly 1978,1983; T. Soikkanen 1983).

A number of works on the armed forces and related subjects during the 1920s and 1930s have appeared (Hersalo 1966; Raikkala 1964; Terä-Tervasmäki 1973; Seppälä 1974, 1974A; Selén 1980; Arimo 1981). Generally speaking, however, this relatively large literature has been unanalytical and for the most part purely descriptive. The development of the Foreign Ministry and the diplomatic corps has been only occasionally studied (Paasivirta

1968). In the area of cultural relations, little research of a survey-type nature taking in the general pattern of developments in the field, and directly applicable to the present work, has been done. An abundance of studies on individual writers and artists does, however, exist (Hiedanniemi 1980). Most of the available literature on Finnish sport concentrates on documenting the country's past sporting achievements and provides only indirect pointers to the wider question of the development of Finland's international sporting links.

Of the country's political parties, only the Social Democratic Party has so far been the subject of a detailed history, to supplement the large amount of essentially cursory material relating to the parties otherwise existing (H. Soikkanen 1975). Extensive surveys are, however, in preparation for a number of the other parties. On the question of more general ideological trends during the inter-war years, interest has been mainly focused on the two extremes of the political spectrum, with communism (Hakalehto 1966; Hodgson 1967; Upton 1970) and right-wing radicalism (Hyvämäki 1971; Alapuro 1973; Nygård 1978,1982; Uola 1982) both attracting a variety of studies. Labour relations and the trade unions have also recently become the subject of increasing attention (Mansner 1981; Ala-Kapee et al 1982). Surveys of Finnish liberalism and conservatism, in contrast, have been thin on the ground. Some work has been done on the language struggle during the 1920s and 1930s (Bondsdorff 1950; P. K. Hämäläinen). Little has so far been produced in the field of press history studies with regard to press coverage of major developments during the inter-war years. Press history studies have remained focused on the period preceding independence.

A number of extensive and sometimes exceptionally extensive biographies of leading political and military figures have appeared over the years (Heinrichs I—II 1957,1961; E. W. Juva II 1961; Jägerskiöld III—IV 1969,1973; Blomstedt 1969; J. Paavolainen II 1979). The scale of these has often allowed their authors to include discussion on a number of more general topics as they have related to their main subjects, including foreign and security policy questions.

The material available in foreign archives, and particularly the reports produced by foreign envoys and legations in Helsinki,

provides a useful guide to the foreign policy aims and areas of interest concerning Finland and the northern Baltic typical of the various countries in question, as well as additional background material for drawing more general conclusions about their overall policies. This material, together with my own and other scholars' previous research in the same field, has played an important part in directing and structuring this present work. The significance of this foreign material is not therefore restricted solely to the instances in which reference to it has been directly made. By their very nature, however, interpretations of policy such as those offered here must always be, in part, speculative.

The early difficulties encountered by the fledgling Ministry of Foreign Affairs is well reflected in the variable quality of diplomatic report material available for the 1920s in particular. Some improvements are noticeable, however, during the 1930s. The use of material from private collections has, by necessity of the sheer amount of documentation existing, been limited.

Much useful information on the development of political and public opinion was gleaned from a careful study of the Finnish press and, on the development of attitudes abroad to Finland, from a similar study of the foreign press. In the case of the latter, the variety of background factors involved in shaping comment required a more selective approach than with the Finnish material.

The value of the large number of memoirs and autobiographies covering the 1920s and 1930s in providing useful insights on the period is restricted by the fact that many were written after the Second World War and against a background of radically different political conditions. A similar caveat must be expressed with regard to the interview material used, although this should not be allowed to detract from its very real value as a source of useful information on less tangible aspects of developments and problems, otherwise unavailable from other sources.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following people, all of whom were of assistance at various stages in the writing of this present work, pointing me in the direction of new source material and offering numerous useful comments on many of the questions raised in the course of my research: Professor Erik Erämetsä, Matti Favorin, Professor Jouko Hautala, Ritva Heikkilä, Pertti Jotuni, Yrjö Kihlberg, Professors Sven Krohn and Matti

Kuusi, Toivo Kärki, Anto Leikola, Aito Mäkinen, Professor R. Palmgren, Aarre M. Peltonen, Professors Tauno Perälä and Lauri Pihkala, Elisa Pispala, Professors Onni Rantala, Sixten Ringbom, Martti Ruutu and Matti Sainio, Dr. Johannes Salminen, Dr. John Screen (London), Lt. Col. Helge Seppälä, Kari Seppänen, J. O. Tallqvist, Professor Ilmar Talve, Topi Törmä, Dr. Bernd Wegner (Freiburg im Breisgau) and Arvo Ylärakkola.

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